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BRITISH POETS  
OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

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THOMPSON

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# BRITISH POETS

*of the* NINETEENTH CENTURY

POEMS BY

WORDSWORTH, COLERIDGE, SCOTT, BYRON, SHELLEY, KEATS,  
LANDOR, TENNYSON, ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING,  
ROBERT BROWNING, FITZGERALD, CLOUGH, ARNOLD,  
DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI, CHRISTINA ROSSETTI,  
MORRIS, SWINBURNE, DOBSON, HENLEY, KIPLING,  
HOUSMAN

EDITED WITH REFERENCE LISTS AND NOTES

BY

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*NEW EDITION*

BY

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CHICAGO

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To M. E. H.

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## PREFACE

1904

THIS volume makes no attempt to do what has already been so excellently done in Mr. Stedman's *Victorian Anthology*, Ward's *English Poets*, and other similar collections. It is not a new Anthology of nineteenth century poetry. Instead of giving a few "gems," or "flowers," from each one of several hundred authors, it includes only the fifteen chief poets of the century. From each one of these, however, it attempts to give a full and adequate selection, sufficient really to represent the man and his work.

The book has been planned, primarily, to give in one volume all the material which should be in the hands of the student for a College or University course on the British poets of the nineteenth century. I have therefore tried to include, first, all the poems which would be given as prescribed reading in such a course; and, second, a thorough guide to the use of a well-equipped college or public library, in connection with that reading. I hope the book may also be found useful for more general courses on English Literature, for which there is no other collection covering exactly this part of the field; and for any reader who wishes to possess in one volume the best work of the chief nineteenth century poets — "Infinite riches in a little room."

The selections are very full, and for the most part consist of complete poems. They are designed both to give all the best of each poet's work, and also (except for Mrs. Browning) to give some representation of each important period and class of his work. Long poems are usually given entire, and space has been found for Byron's *Manfred*, Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound*, Scott's *Marmion*, Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner* and *Christabel*, Keats' *Hyperion*, Tennyson's *Guinevere* and *Morte d'Arthur*, Browning's *Pippa Passes*, Mrs. Browning's *Sonnets from the Portuguese*, Arnold's *Sohrab and Rustum*, Morris's *Atalanta's Race*, etc., etc. In general, extracts from long poems are not given, except in the case of single cantos which are complete in themselves, like the last two cantos of *Childe Harold*; or lyrics, such as the songs from Tennyson's dramas, or the Hymns to Pan and Diana in Keats' *Endymion*, which, when detached, make perfect and independent poems. An exception has been made in the case of Byron's master-work, *Don Juan*, which of course could not be given in full, and which has been represented by long passages.

The amount of space given to an author does not necessarily correspond with his relative importance or rank as a poet. Some authors can best be represented by their shorter poems, while others — Scott, for instance, and William Morris — could not be fairly represented at all unless one of their longer poems were given. Browning and Byron could not be represented without some complete example of their poems in dra-

matic form, while Tennyson's drama does not hold the same relative importance in his work. Byron, in particular, cannot really be known except through his longer poems; some example must necessarily be given of the series of Oriental Romances, which, with *Childe Harold*, won him his early fame; at least one Canto of *Childe Harold* must be given complete; an example of the great Satires must be known in the *Vision of Judgment*; and finally the whole man is summed up in the different aspects of *Don Juan*. Wordsworth, on the other hand, has less space than poets of inferior rank; but he is represented by a hundred complete poems, the largest number given for any author.

The selection of shorter poems has been made generously inclusive. For Browning, more than two-thirds of the *Dramatic Lyrics*, and more than half of the *Dramatic Romances* and *Men and Women*, as well as representative poems from the other collections, are given. For Keats, the entire contents (except one poem) of the volume of 1820 is given, as well as full representation of his earlier volumes and of the posthumous poems. I have included nearly eighty poems from Landor, and hope that this — I think the first — representative selection from his verse may serve to make his work as a poet more familiarly known, in the sheer beauty of its simplicity and condensation. No apology need be made, I hope, for the extent of the Shelley selections, since his *Alastor*, *Lines Written among the Euganean Hills*, *Epipsychidion*, *The Sensitive Plant*, *Adonais*, etc., as well as the *Prometheus Unbound*, make his work take a large amount of space in proportion to the number of titles. For Rossetti, I have given more than two-thirds of the sonnets from the *House of Life*, as well as *Sister Helen*, *The Stream's Secret*, *Love's Nocturn*, *The Burden of Nineveh*, *The King's Tragedy*, and some thirty or forty of the shorter poems. I hope that the space devoted to him will be found to represent a true judgment of his great permanent value as a poet; and that the same will be true of the still larger amount of space given to the poet most different from him, Matthew Arnold.

A principal feature of the volume is the classified *Reference Lists*. I have tried to indicate, for each poet, the standard editions, other important editions, the best one-volume editions, the standard biography, the best brief biography, and all the important essays. The critical essays are usually classed in two paragraphs, and, throughout, the most important books or essays are indicated by asterisks.

The Notes have been made as few and brief as possible; and critical comment, except that of the poet himself, or, in a few cases, of other poets, has been excluded from them. They give only essential *facts* regarding the poems, or comment and explanation added by the poet himself.

The poems are arranged in chronological order under each author, according to the dates of writing when these are known, and in other cases according to the dates of publication. The dates are given after each poem, dates of writing being indicated by italic figures, and dates of publication by upright figures.

It is a pleasure to acknowledge the ready generosity with which critics and teachers have given their help in making the selections. My thanks are due, in particular, to Mr. Paul E. More of the *New York Evening Post*, to Professor Stoddard of New York University, Professor Trent and Professor Odell of Columbia University, Professor Baker and Professor Sykes of Teachers' College, Professor van Dyke of Princeton, and Professor Mott of the College of the City of New York.



It can hardly be hoped that such a book as this will be entirely free from errors, especially in the reference lists and dates. Any corrections will be gratefully received. Most of the proof has been carefully read three times, but — as my friend Ronsard hath said — *Tu excuseras les fautes de l'imprimeur, car tous les yeux d'Argus n'y verraient assez clair.*

CURTIS HIDDEN PAGE

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

September, 1904

## PREFACE

1910

IN the present edition a number of typographical errors have been corrected, the text and dates of some poems have been verified by comparison with more authoritative editions than were available when the book was first published, an Index of First Lines has been added to the Author-Index and Title-Index, and the Reference Lists have been thoroughly revised and brought up to date. I am under obligation to several friends who have sent me corrections and especially suggestions for the improvement of the Reference Lists: in particular to Professor Lane Cooper, Professor Frank E. Farley, Miss Henriette E. Moore, Professor A. B. Milford, Professor Richard Jones, and Professor Charles W. Hodell; and I take this opportunity to thank the many other teachers who have written me concerning their use of the book. It is a pleasure to know that the general plan and method of the book, and of the Reference Lists, have been found helpful; and though these have been only too generously flattered by imitation, it is also a pleasure to note that no similar collection has ventured to include so much as one-third the material offered by the present volume.

C. H. P.

*September, 1910*

## PREFACE TO THE NEW EDITION

1929

THE present revision of *British Poets of the Nineteenth Century* has been carried out with the advice of Professor Page in an attempt to render it still more useful to its wide range of readers and students. The original plan remains unchanged: to give in attractive form, with ample critical help, abundant selections from the work of the truly outstanding British poets of the Nineteenth Century.

With minor exceptions all the poems of the first edition have been retained. A few poems of Clough and Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Scott's *Marmion*, and some of Mrs. Browning's *Sonnets from the Portuguese* are the only excisions. The omission of a few of Mrs. Browning's sonnets has given opportunity for the inclusion of a representative group of her miscellaneous poems. Material additions have also been made to the selections from Wordsworth and from Tennyson.

On the same generous scale as with the original fifteen poets in the collection, works of six other writers have been added, and the scope of the book thus extended to the end of the century. The poets appearing for the first time in this edition are FitzGerald, Christina Rossetti, Dobson, Henley, Kipling, and Housman.

The reference lists have been brought down to date and new lists have been provided for the poets added. So rapidly have critical works dealing with the poets of this collection appeared in the past two decades that in many cases the reference lists are more than twice the length of those in the revision of 1910. It is hoped that these revised lists may prove especially helpful.

The entire book has been reset in a new form, so that although a very substantial increase has been made in the number of poems the pages may be pleasant to read and the book easy to carry.

Page's *British Poets of the Nineteenth Century* has long occupied a unique position in its field. No higher goal could be set for the revision than to carry on with renewed vigor this fine tradition of service to students and lovers of poetry.

Acknowledgment is made to Mr. Rudyard Kipling, to A. P. Watt & Son, English agents for Rudyard Kipling, and to Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc., American publishers, for permission to use the following poems: "The Ballad of East and West" from *Barrack Room Ballads*, copyright 1892 and 1899 by Rudyard Kipling; "Prelude to Departmental Ditties," copyright 1899 by Rudyard Kipling; "Danny Deever" from *Barrack Room Ballads*, copyright 1892 and 1899 by Rudyard Kipling; "Tommy" from *Barrack Room Ballads*, copyright 1892 and 1899 by Rudyard Kipling; "Gunga Din" from *Barrack Room Ballads*, copyright 1892 and 1899 by Rudyard Kipling; "Mandalay" from *Barrack Room Ballads*, copyright 1892



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STITH THOMPSON

INDIANA UNIVERSITY  
May, 1929

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<sup>1</sup>The poems of each author are arranged in chronological order. Exact dates will be found at the end of each poem.

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<sup>1</sup> TO WORDSWORTH (page 610, note) chronologically precedes ALASTOR.



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# WORDSWORTH

## EXTRACT

FROM THE CONCLUSION OF A POEM, COMPOSED IN ANTICIPATION OF LEAVING SCHOOL

Written at Hawkshead. The beautiful image with which this poem concludes, suggested itself to me while I was resting in a boat along with my companions under the shade of a magnificent row of sycamores, which then extended their branches from the shore of the promontory upon which stands the ancient, and at that time the more picturesque, Hall of Coniston, the seat of the Le Flemings from very early times. The poem of which it was the conclusion was of many hundred lines, and contained thoughts and images most of which have been dispersed through my other writings. (*Wordsworth's note.*)

DEAR native regions, I foretell,  
From what I feel at this farewell,  
That, wheresoe'er my steps may tend,  
And whensoe'er my course shall end,  
If in that hour a single tie  
Survive of local sympathy,  
My soul will cast the backward view,  
The longing look alone on you.

Thus, while the Sun sinks down to rest  
Far in the regions of the west,  
Though to the vale no parting beam  
Be given, not one memorial gleam,  
A lingering light he fondly throws  
On the dear hills where first he rose.

1786. 1815.<sup>1</sup>

## WRITTEN IN VERY EARLY YOUTH

CALM is all nature as a resting wheel.  
The kine are couched upon the dewy  
grass;  
The horse alone, seen dimly as I pass,  
Is cropping audibly his later meal:

<sup>1</sup> Italic figures indicate the year of writing; upright figures the year of publication. The dates for Wordsworth are taken from the latest editions of William Knight, A. J. George, and Thomas Hutchinson.

Dark is the ground; a slumber seems to  
steal

O'er vale, and mountain, and the starless  
sky.

Now, in this blank of things, a harmony,  
Home-felt, and home-created, comes to  
heal

That grief for which the senses still supply  
Fresh food; for only then, when memory  
Is hushed, am I at rest. My Friends!  
restrain

Those busy cares that would allay my  
pain;

Oh! leave me to myself, nor let me feel  
The officious touch that makes me droop  
again.

1786. 1807.

## LINES

LEFT UPON A SEAT IN A YEW-TREE,  
WHICH STANDS NEAR THE LAKE OF ESTHWAITE, ON A DESOLATE PART OF THE  
SHORE, COMMANDING A BEAUTIFUL PROSPECT

Composed in part at school at Hawkshead. The tree has disappeared, and the slip of Common on which it stood, that ran parallel to the lake and lay open to it, has long been enclosed; so that the road has lost much of its attraction. This spot was my favorite walk in the evenings during the latter part of my school-time. (*Wordsworth.*)

NAY, Traveller! rest. This lonely Yew-tree stands

Far from all human dwelling: what if here  
No sparkling rivulet spread the verdant  
herb?

What if the bee love not these barren  
boughs?

Yet, if the wind breathe soft, the curling  
waves,

That break against the shore, shall lull  
thy mind

By one soft impulse saved from vacancy.

Who he was  
That piled these stones and with the  
mossy sod

First covered, and here taught this aged  
 Tree  
 With its dark arms to form a circling  
 bower,  
 I well remember. — He was one who  
 owned  
 No common soul. In youth by science  
 nursed,  
 And led by nature into a wild scene  
 Of lofty hopes, he to the world went  
 forth  
 A favored Being, knowing no desire  
 Which genius did not hallow; 'gainst the  
 taint  
 Of dissolute tongues, and jealousy, and  
 hate,  
 And scorn, — against all enemies pre-  
 pared,  
 All but neglect. The world, for so it  
 thought,  
 Owed him no service; wherefore he at  
 once  
 With indignation turned himself away,  
 And with the food of pride sustained his  
 soul  
 In solitude. — Stranger! these gloomy  
 boughs  
 Had charms for him; and here he loved  
 to sit,  
 His only visitants a straggling sheep,  
 The stone-chat, or the glancing sand-  
 piper:  
 And on these barren rocks, with fern and  
 heath,  
 And juniper and thistle, sprinkled o'er,  
 Fixing his downcast eye, he many an  
 hour  
 A morbid pleasure nourished, tracing  
 here  
 An emblem of his own unfruitful life:  
 And, lifting up his head, he then would  
 gaze  
 On the more distant scene, — how lovely  
 'tis  
 Thou seest, — and he would gaze till it  
 became  
 Far lovelier, and his heart could not sus-  
 tain  
 The beauty, still more beauteous! Nor,  
 that time,  
 When nature had subdued him to herself,  
 Would he forget those Beings to whose  
 minds,  
 Warm from the labors of benevolence,  
 The world, and human life, appeared a  
 scene

Of kindred loveliness: then he would sigh,  
 Inly disturbed, to think that others felt  
 What he must never feel: and so, lost  
 Man!  
 On visionary views would fancy feed,  
 Till his eye streamed with tears. In this  
 deep vale  
 He died, — this seat his only monument.  
 If Thou be one whose heart the holy  
 forms  
 Of young imagination have kept pure,  
 Stranger! henceforth be warned; and  
 know that pride,  
 Howe'er disguised in its own majesty,  
 Is littleness; that he, who feels contempt  
 For any living thing, hath faculties  
 Which he has never used; that thought  
 with him  
 Is in its infancy. The man whose eye  
 Is ever on himself doth look on one,  
 The least of Nature's works, one who  
 might move  
 The wise man to that scorn which wisdom  
 holds  
 Unlawful, ever. O be wiser, Thou!  
 Instructed that true knowledge leads to  
 love;  
 True dignity abides with him alone  
 Who, in the silent hour of inward thought,  
 Can still suspect, and still revere himself,  
 In lowliness of heart.

1787-1795. 1798.

## THE REVERIE OF POOR SUSAN

This arose out of my observation of the affecting music of these birds hanging in this way in the London streets during the freshness and stillness of the Spring morning. (*Wordsworth.*)

At the corner of Wood Street, when day-  
 light appears,  
 Hangs a Thrush that sings loud, it has  
 sung for three years;  
 Poor Susan has passed by the spot, and  
 has heard  
 In the silence of morning the song of the  
 Bird.  
 'Tis a note of enchantment; what ails  
 her? She sees  
 A mountain ascending, a vision of trees;  
 Bright volumes of vapor through Loth-  
 bury glide,  
 And a river flows on through the vale of  
 Cheapside.



Green pastures she views in the midst of  
the dale,  
Down which she so often has tripped with  
her pail;  
And a single small cottage, a nest like a  
dove's,  
The one only dwelling on earth that she  
loves.

She looks, and her heart is in heaven: but  
they fade,  
The mist and the river, the hill and the  
shade:  
The stream will not flow, and the hill will  
not rise,  
And the colors have all passed away from  
her eyes! 1797. 1800.

### A NIGHT-PIECE

Composed on the road between Nether Stowey  
and Alfoxden, extempore. I distinctly recollect the  
very moment that I was struck, as described —  
"He looks up — the clouds are split," etc.  
(*Wordsworth*.)

"Wordsworth particularly recommended to me  
among his Poems of Imagination, *Yew Trees*, and a  
description of Night. These, he says, are amongst  
the best for the imaginative power displayed in  
them." (Henry Crabb Robinson's *Diary*, May 9,  
1815.)

—— THE sky is overcast

With a continuous cloud of texture close,  
Heavy and wan, all whitened by the  
Moon,

Which through that veil is indistinctly  
seen,

A dull, contracted circle, yielding light  
So feebly spread, that not a shadow falls,  
Chequering the ground — from rock,  
plant, tree, or tower.

At length a pleasant instantaneous gleam  
Startles the pensive traveller while he  
treads

His lonesome path, with unobserving eye  
Bent earthward; he looks up — the  
clouds are split

Asunder, — and above his head he sees  
The clear Moon, and the glory of the  
heavens.

There, in a black-blue vault she sails  
along,

Followed by multitudes of stars, that,  
small

And sharp, and bright, along the dark  
abyss

Drive as she drives: how fast they wheel  
away,

Yet vanish not! — the wind is in the tree  
But they are silent; — still they roll along  
Immeasurably distant; and the vault,  
Built round by those white clouds, enor-  
mous clouds,

Still deepens its unfathomable depth.  
At length the Vision closes; and the mind,  
Not undisturbed by the delight it feels,  
Which slowly settles into peaceful calm,  
Is left to muse upon the solemn scene.

1798. 1815.

### WE ARE SEVEN

— A SIMPLE Child,  
That lightly draws its breath,  
And feels its life in every limb,  
What should it know of death?

I met a little cottage Girl:  
She was eight years old, she said;  
Her hair was thick with many a curl  
That clustered round her head.

She had a rustic, woodland air,  
And she was wildly clad:  
Her eyes were fair, and very fair;  
— Her beauty made me glad.

"Sisters and brothers, little Maid,  
How many may you be?"  
"How many? Seven in all," she said  
And wondering looked at me.

"And where are they? I pray you tell."  
She answered, "Seven are we;  
And two of us at Conway dwell,  
And two are gone to sea.

"Two of us in the church-yard lie,  
My sister and my brother;  
And in the church-yard cottage, I  
Dwell near them with my mother."

"You say that two at Conway dwell  
And two are gone to sea,  
Yet ye are seven! — I pray you tell,  
Sweet Maid, how this may be."

Then did the little Maid reply,  
"Seven boys and girls are we;  
Two of us in the church-yard lie,  
Beneath the church-yard tree."

"You run about, my little Maid,  
Your limbs they are alive;  
If two are in the church-yard laid,  
Then ye are only five."

*Deer. of emotion*



"Their graves are green, they may be seen,"

The little Maid replied,  
"Twelve steps or more from my mother's door,

And they are side by side.

"My stockings there I often knit,  
My kerchief there I hem;  
And there upon the ground I sit,  
And sing a song to them.

"And often after sunset, Sir,  
When it is light and fair,  
I take my little porringer,  
And eat my supper there.

"The first that died was sister Jane;  
In bed she moaning lay,  
Till God released her of her pain;  
And then she went away.

"So in the church-yard she was laid;  
And, when the grass was dry,  
Together round her grave we played,  
My brother John and I.

"And when the ground was white with snow,  
And I could run and slide,  
My brother John was forced to go,  
And he lies by her side."

"How many are you, then," said I,  
"If they two are in heaven?"  
Quick was the little Maid's reply,  
"O Master! we are seven."

"But they are dead; those two are dead!  
Their spirits are in heaven!"  
'Twas throwing words away; for still  
The little Maid would have her will,  
And said, "Nay, we are seven!"

1798. 1798.

### THE THORN

Written at Alfoxden. Arose out of my observing, on the ridge of Quantock Hill, on a stormy day, a thorn which I had often past, in calm and bright weather, without noticing it. I said to myself, "Cannot I by some invention do as much to make this Thorn permanently an impressive object as the storm has made it to my eyes at this moment?" I began the poem accordingly, and composed it with great rapidity. Sir George Beaumont painted a picture from it which Wilkie thought his best. He gave it me; though when he saw it several times at Rydal Mount afterwards, he said, "I could make a better, and would like to paint the same subject over again." The sky in this picture

is nobly done, but it reminds one too much of Wilson. The only fault, however, of any consequence is the female figure, which is too old and decrepit for one likely to frequent an eminence on such a call. (*Wordsworth.*)

#### I

"THERE is a Thorn — it looks so old,  
In truth, you'd find it hard to say  
How it could ever have been young,  
It looks so old and grey.  
Not higher than a two years' child  
It stands erect, this aged Thorn;  
No leaves it has, no prickly points;  
It is a mass of knotted joints,  
A wretched thing forlorn.  
It stands erect, and like a stone  
With lichens is it overgrown.

#### II

"Like rock or stone, it is o'ergrown,  
With lichens to the very top,  
And hung with heavy tufts of moss,  
A melancholy crop:  
Up from the earth these mosses creep,  
And this poor Thorn they clasp it round  
So close, you'd say that they are bent  
With plain and manifest intent  
To drag it to the ground;  
And all have joined in one endeavour  
To bury this poor Thorn for ever.

#### III

"High on a mountain's highest ridge  
Where oft the stormy winter gale  
Cuts like a scythe, while through the clouds  
It sweeps from vale to vale;  
Not five yards from the mountain path,  
This Thorn you on your left espy;  
And to the left, three yards beyond,  
You see a little muddy pond  
Of water — never dry  
Though but of compass small, and bare  
To thirsty suns and parching air.

#### IV

"And, close beside this aged Thorn,  
There is a fresh and lovely sight,  
A beauteous heap, a hill of moss,  
Just half a foot in height.  
All lovely colours there you see,  
All colours that were ever seen;  
And mossy network too is there,  
As if by hand of lady fair  
The work had woven been;  
And cups, the darlings of the eye,  
So deep is their vermilion dye.

## V

"Ah me! what lovely tints are there  
Of olive green and scarlet bright,  
In spikes, in branches, and in stars,  
Green, red, and pearly white!  
This heap of earth o'ergrown with moss,  
Which close beside the Thorn you see,  
So fresh in all its beauteous dyes,  
Is like an infant's grave in size,  
As like as like can be:  
But never, never any where,  
An infant's grave was half so fair.

## VI

"Now would you see this aged Thorn,  
This pond, and beauteous hill of moss,  
You must take care and choose your time  
The mountain when to cross.  
For oft there sits between the heap  
So like an infant's grave in size,  
And that same pond of which I spoke,  
A Woman in a scarlet cloak,  
And to herself she cries,  
'Oh misery! oh misery!  
Oh woe is me! oh misery!'"

## VII

"At all times of the day and night  
This wretched Woman thither goes;  
And she is known to every star,  
And every wind that blows;  
And there, beside the Thorn, she sits  
When the blue daylight's in the skies  
And when the whirlwind's on the hill,  
Or frosty air is keen and still,  
And to herself she cries,  
'Oh misery! oh misery!  
Oh woe is me! oh misery!'"

## VIII

"Now wherefore, thus, by day and night,  
In rain, in tempest, and in snow,  
Thus to the dreary mountain-top  
Does this poor Woman go?  
And why sits she beside the Thorn  
When the blue daylight's in the sky,  
Or when the whirlwind's on the hill,  
Or frosty air is keen and still,  
And wherefore does she cry? —  
O wherefore? wherefore? tell me why  
Does she repeat that doleful cry?"

## IX

"I cannot tell; I wish I could;  
For the true reason no one knows:

But would you gladly view the spot,  
The spot to which she goes;  
The hillock like an infant's grave,  
The pond — and Thorn, so old and grey;  
Pass by her door — 't is seldom shut —  
And, if you see her in her hut —  
Then to the spot away!  
I never heard of such as dare  
Approach the spot when she is there."

## X

"But wherefore to the mountain-top  
Can this unhappy Woman go? —  
Whatever star is in the skies,  
Whatever wind may blow?" —  
"Full twenty years are past and gone  
Since she (her name is Martha Ray)  
Gave with a maiden's true good-will —  
Her company to Stephen Hill;  
And she was blithe and gay,  
While friends and kindred all approved  
Of him whom tenderly she loved.

## XI

"And they had fixed the wedding day.  
The morning that must wed them both;  
But Stephen to another Maid  
Had sworn another oath;  
And, with this other Maid, to church  
Unthinking Stephen went —  
Poor Martha! on that woeful day  
A pang of pitiless dismay  
Into her soul was sent;  
A fire was kindled in her breast,  
Which might not burn itself to rest.

## XII

"They say, full six months after this,  
While yet the summer leaves were green,  
She to the mountain-top would go,  
And there was often seen.  
What could she seek? — or wish to hide?  
Her state to any eye was plain;  
She was with child, and she was mad;  
Yet often was she sober sad  
From her exceeding pain.  
O guilty Father — would that death  
Had saved him from that breach of faith!

## XIII

"Sad case for such a brain to hold  
Communion with a stirring child!  
Sad case, as you may think, for one  
Who had a brain so wild!  
Last Christmas-eve we talked of this,

And grey-haired Wilfred of the glen  
Held that the unborn infant wrought  
About its mother's heart, and brought  
Her senses back again :  
And, when at last her time drew near,  
Her looks were calm, her senses clear.

## XIV ~

"More know I not, I wish I did,  
And it should all be told to you ;  
For what became of this poor child  
No mortal ever knew ;  
Nay — if a child to her was born  
No earthly tongue could ever tell ;  
And if 't was born alive or dead,  
Far less could this with proof be said ;  
But some remember well,  
That Martha Ray about this time  
Would up the mountain often climb.

## XV ~

"And all that winter, when at night  
The wind blew from the mountain-peak,  
'T was worth your while, though in the  
dark,  
The churchyard path to seek !  
For many a time and oft were heard  
Cries coming from the mountain head :  
Some plainly living voices were ;  
And others, I 've heard many swear,  
Were voices of the dead :  
I cannot think, whate'er they say,  
They had to do with Martha Ray.

## XVI

"But that she goes to this old Thorn,  
The Thorn which I described to you,  
And there sits in a scarlet cloak  
I will be sworn is true.  
For one day with my telescope,  
To view the ocean wide and bright,  
When to this country first I came,  
Ere I had heard of Martha's name,  
I climbed the mountain's height : —  
A storm came on, and I could see  
No object higher than my knee.

## XVII ~

"'Twas mist and rain, and storm and  
rain :  
No screen, no fence could I discover ;  
And then the wind ! in sooth, it was  
A wind full ten times over.  
I looked around, I thought I saw  
A jutting crag, — and off I ran,

Head-foremost, through the driving rain,  
The shelter of the crag to gain ;  
And, as I am a man,  
Instead of jutting crag, I found  
A Woman seated on the ground.

## XVIII ~

"I did not speak — I saw her face ;  
Her face ! — it was enough for me ;  
I turned about and heard her cry,  
'Oh misery ! oh misery !'  
And there she sits, until the moon  
Through half the clear blue sky will go ;  
And, when the little breezes make  
The waters of the pond to shake,  
As all the country know,  
She shudders, and you hear her cry,  
'Oh misery ! oh misery !'"

## XIX

"But what's the Thorn ? and what the  
pond ?  
And what the hill of moss to her ?  
And what the creeping breeze that comes  
The little pond to stir ?"  
"I cannot tell ; but some will say  
She hanged her baby on the tree ;  
Some say she drowned it in the pond,  
Which is a little step beyond :  
But all and each agree,  
The little Babe was buried there,  
Beneath that hill of moss so fair.

## XX

"I've heard, the moss is spotted red  
With drops of that poor infant's blood ;  
But kill a new-born infant thus,  
I do not think she could !  
Some say, if to the pond you go,  
And fix on it a steady view,  
The shadow of a babe you trace,  
A baby and a baby's face,  
And that it looks at you ;  
Whene'er you look on it, 'tis plain  
The baby looks at you again.

## XXI

"And some had sworn an oath that she  
Should be to public justice brought ;  
And for the little infant's bones  
With spades they would have sought.  
But instantly the hill of moss  
Before their eyes began to stir !  
And, for full fifty yards around,  
The grass — it shook upon the ground !

Yet all do still aver  
The little Babe lies buried there,  
Beneath that hill of moss so fair.

## XXII

"I cannot tell how this may be,  
But plain it is the Thorn is bound  
With heavy tufts of moss that strive  
To drag it to the ground;  
And this I know, full many a time,  
When she was on the mountain high,  
By day, and in the silent night,  
When all the stars shone clear and bright,  
That I have heard her cry,  
'Oh misery! oh misery!'  
Oh woe is me! oh misery!"

1798. 1798.

## SIMON LEE

## THE OLD HUNTSMAN

WITH AN INCIDENT IN WHICH HE WAS  
CONCERNED

This old man had been huntsman to the squires  
of Alfoxden. . . . The fact was as mentioned in  
the poem; and I have, after an interval of forty-five  
years, the image of the old man as fresh before my  
eyes as if I had seen him yesterday. The expres-  
sion when the hounds were out, "I dearly love their  
voice," was word for word from his own lips.

(Wordsworth.)

IN the sweet shire of Cardigan,  
Not far from pleasant Ivor-hall,  
An old Man dwells, a little man, —  
'Tis said he once was tall.  
Full five and thirty years he lived  
A running huntsman merry;  
And still the centre of his cheek  
Is red as a ripe cherry.

No man like him the horn could sound,  
And hill and valley rang with glee  
When Echo banded, round and round,  
The halloo of Simon Lee.  
In those proud days, he little cared  
For husbandry or tillage;  
To blither tasks did Simon rouse  
The sleepers of the village.

He all the country could outrun,  
Could leave both man and horse behind:  
And often, ere the chase was done,  
He reeled and was stone-blind.  
And still there's something in the world  
At which his heart rejoices;  
For when the chiming hounds are out,  
He dearly loves their voices!

But, oh the heavy change! — bereft  
Of health, strength, friends, and kindred,  
see!

Old Simon to the world is left  
In liveried poverty.  
His Master's dead, — and no one now  
Dwells in the Hall of Ivor;  
Men, dogs, and horses, all are dead;  
He is the sole survivor.

And he is lean and he is sick;  
His body, dwindled and awry,  
Rests upon ankles swollen and thick;  
His legs are thin and dry.  
One prop he has, and only one,  
His wife, an aged woman,  
Lives with him, near the waterfall,  
Upon the village Common.

Beside their moss-grown hut of clay,  
Not twenty paces from the door,  
A scrap of land they have, but they  
Are poorest of the poor.  
This scrap of land he from the heath  
Enclosed when he was stronger;  
But what to them avails the land  
Which he can till no longer?

Oft, working by her Husband's side,  
Ruth does what Simon cannot do;  
For she, with scanty cause for pride,  
Is stouter of the two.  
And, though you with your utmost skill  
From labor could not wear them.  
'Tis little, very little — all  
That they can do between them.

Few months of life has he in store  
As he to you will tell,  
For still, the more he works, the more  
Do his weak ankles swell.  
My gentle Reader, I perceive  
How patiently you've waited,  
And now I fear that you expect  
Some tale will be related.

O Reader! had you in your mind  
Such stores as silent thought can bring,  
O gentle Reader! you would find  
A tale in every thing.  
What more I have to say is short,  
And you must kindly take it:  
It is no tale; but, should you think,  
Perhaps a tale you'll make it.

One summer-day I chanced to see  
 This old Man doing all he could  
 To unearth the root of an old tree,  
 A stump of rotten wood.  
 The mattock tottered in his hand;  
 So vain was his endeavor,  
 That at the root of the old tree  
 He might have worked for ever.

"You're overtasked, good Simon Lee,  
 Give me your tool," to him I said;  
 And at the word right gladly he  
 Received my proffered aid.  
 I struck, and with a single blow  
 The tangled root I severed,  
 At which the poor old Man so long  
 And vainly had endeavored.

The tears into his eyes were brought,  
 And thanks and praises seemed to run  
 So fast out of his heart, I thought  
 They never would have done.  
 — I've heard of hearts unkind, kind deeds  
 With coldness still returning;  
 Alas! the gratitude of men  
 Hath oftener left me mourning.

1798. 1798.

### LINES WRITTEN IN EARLY SPRING

I HEARD a thousand blended notes,  
 While in a grove I sate reclined,  
 In that sweet mood when pleasant  
 thoughts  
 Bring sad thoughts to the mind.

To her fair works did Nature link  
 The human soul that through me ran;  
 And much it grieved my heart to think  
 What man has made of man.

Through primrose tufts, in that green  
 bower,  
 The periwinkle trailed its wreaths;  
 And 'tis my faith that every flower  
 Enjoys the air it breathes.

The birds around me hopped and played,  
 Their thoughts I cannot measure: —  
 But the least motion which they made  
 It seemed a thrill of pleasure.

The budding twigs spread out their fan,  
 To catch the breezy air;  
 And I must think, do all I can,  
 That there was pleasure there

If this belief from heaven be sent,  
 If such be Nature's holy plan,  
 Have I not reason to lament  
 What man has made of man?  
 1798. 1798.

### TO MY SISTER

It is the first mild day of March:  
 Each minute sweeter than before  
 The redbreast sings from the tall larch  
 That stands beside our door.

There is a blessing in the air,  
 Which seems a sense of joy to yield  
 To the bare trees, and mountains bare,  
 And grass in the green field.

My sister! ('tis a wish of mine)  
 Now that our morning meal is done,  
 Make haste, your morning task resign;  
 Come forth and feel the sun.

Edward will come with you; — and, pray,  
 Put on with speed your woodland dress;  
 And bring no book: for this one day  
 We'll give to idleness.

No joyless forms shall regulate  
 Our living calendar:  
 We from to-day, my Friend, will date  
 The opening of the year.

Love, now a universal birth,  
 From heart to heart is stealing,  
 From earth to man, from man to earth:  
 — It is the hour of feeling.

One moment now may give us more  
 Than years of toiling reason:  
 Our minds shall drink at every pore  
 The spirit of the season.

Some silent laws our hearts will make,  
 Which they shall long obey:  
 We for the year to come may take  
 Our temper from to-day.

And from the blessed power that rolls  
 About, below, above,  
 We'll frame the measure of our souls:  
 They shall be tuned to love.

Then come, my Sister! come, I pray,  
 With speed put on your woodland dress;  
 And bring no book: for this one day  
 We'll give to idleness. 1798. 1798.



## A WHIRL-BLAST FROM BEHIND THE HILL

A WHIRL-BLAST from behind the hill  
Rushed o'er the wood with startling  
sound;

Then — all at once the air was still,  
And showers of hailstones pattered round.  
Where leafless oaks towered high above,  
I sat within an undergrove  
Of tallest hollies, tall and green;  
A fairer bower was never seen.  
From year to year the spacious floor  
With withered leaves is covered o'er,  
And all the year the bower is green.  
But see! where'er the hailstones drop  
The withered leaves all skip and hop;  
There's not a breeze — no breath of air —  
Yet here, and there, and everywhere  
Along the floor, beneath the shade  
By those embowering hollies made,  
The leaves in myriads jump and spring,  
As if with pipes and music rare  
Some Robin Good-fellow were there,  
And all those leaves, in festive glee,  
Were dancing to the minstrelsy.

1798. 1800.

## EXPOSTULATION AND REPLY

"WHY, William, on that old gray stone  
Thus for the length of half a day,  
Why, William, sit you thus alone,  
And dream your time away?"

"Where are your books? — that light  
bequeathed  
To Beings else forlorn and blind!  
Up! up! and drink the spirit breathed  
From dead men to their kind.

"You look round on your Mother Earth,  
As if she for no purpose bore you;  
As if you were her first-born birth,  
And none had lived before you!"

One morning thus, by Esthwaite lake,  
When life was sweet, I knew not why,  
To me my good friend Matthew spake,  
And thus I made reply:

"The eye — it cannot choose but see;  
We cannot bid the ear be still;  
Our bodies feel, where'er they be,  
Against or with our will.

"Nor less I deem that there are Powers  
Which of themselves our minds impress;  
That we can feed this mind of ours  
In a wise passiveness.

"Think you, 'mid all this mighty sum  
Of things for ever speaking,  
That nothing of itself will come,  
But we must still be seeking?"

"— Then ask not wherefore, here, alone,  
Conversing as I may,  
I sit upon this old gray stone,  
And dream my time away."

1798. 1798.

## THE TABLES TURNED

AN EVENING SCENE ON THE SAME  
SUBJECT

UP! up! my Friend, and quit your books;  
Or surely you'll grow double:  
Up! up! my Friend, and clear your  
looks;  
Why all this toil and trouble?

The sun, above the mountain's head,  
A freshening lustre mellow  
Through all the long green fields has  
spread,  
His first sweet evening yellow.

Books! 'tis a dull and endless strife:  
Come, hear the woodland linnet,  
How sweet his music! on my life,  
There's more of wisdom in it.

And hark! how blithe the throstle sings!  
He, too, is no mean preacher:  
Come forth into the light of things,  
Let Nature be your teacher.

She has a world of ready wealth,  
Our minds and hearts to bless —  
Spontaneous wisdom breathed by health,  
Truth breathed by cheerfulness.

One impulse from a vernal wood  
May teach you more of man,  
Of moral evil and of good,  
Than all the sages can.

Sweet is the lore which Nature brings;  
Our meddling intellect  
Mis-shapes the beauteous forms of things:  
We murder to dissect.

*ms. of - expostulation*

Enough of Science and of Art;  
Close up those barren leaves;  
Come forth, and bring with you a heart  
That watches and receives.

1798. 1798.

### LINES

COMPOSED A FEW MILES ABOVE TINTERN  
ABBEY, ON REVISITING THE BANKS OF THE  
WYE DURING A TOUR. JULY 13, 1798

No poem of mine was composed under circumstances more pleasant for me to remember than this. I began it upon leaving Tintern, after crossing the Wye, and concluded it just as I was entering Bristol in the evening, after a ramble of four or five days, with my sister. Not a line of it was altered, and not any part of it written down till I reached Bristol. It was published almost immediately after in the little volume of which so much has been said in these Notes. (*Wordsworth*. The volume referred to is *The Lyrical Ballads*, as first published at Bristol by Cottle.)

FIVE years have past; five summers, with  
the length  
Of five long winters! and again I hear  
These waters, rolling from their mountain-  
springs  
With a soft inland murmur.<sup>1</sup> — Once  
again  
Do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs,  
That on a wild secluded scene impress  
Thoughts of more deep seclusion; and  
connect  
The landscape with the quiet of the sky.  
The day is come when I again repose  
Here, under this dark sycamore, and  
view  
These plots of cottage-ground, these or-  
chard-tufts,  
Which at this season, with their unripe  
fruits,  
Are clad in one green hue, and lose them-  
selves  
'Mid groves and copses. Once again I see  
These hedge-rows, hardly hedge-rows,  
little lines  
Of sportive wood run wild: these pastoral  
farms,  
Green to the very door; and wreaths of  
smoke  
Sent up, in silence, from among the trees!  
With some uncertain notice, as might  
seem

<sup>1</sup> The river is not affected by the tides a few miles above Tintern. (*Wordsworth*, 1798.)

Of vagrant dwellers in the houseless  
woods,  
Or of some Hermit's cave, where by his  
fire  
The Hermit sits alone.

These beauteous forms,  
Through a long absence, have not been to  
me

As is a landscape to a blind man's eye:  
But oft, in lonely rooms, and 'mid the din  
Of towns and cities, I have owed to them  
In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,  
Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart;  
And passing even into my purer mind,  
With tranquil restoration: — feelings too  
Of unremembered pleasure: such, per-  
haps,

As have no slight or trivial influence  
On that best portion of a good man's life,  
His little, nameless, unremembered acts  
Of kindness and of love. Nor less, I  
trust,

To them I may have owed another gift,  
Of aspect more sublime; that blessed  
mood,

In which the burthen of the mystery,  
In which the heavy and the weary weight  
Of all this unintelligible world,  
Is lightened: — that serene and blessed  
mood,

In which the affections gently lead us  
on, —

Until, the breath of this corporeal frame  
And even the motion of our human blood  
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep  
In body, and become a living soul:  
While with an eye made quiet by the  
power

Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,  
We see into the life of things.

If this  
Be but a vain belief, yet, oh! how oft —  
In darkness and amid the many shapes  
Of joyless daylight; when the fretful stir  
Unprofitable, and the fever of the world,  
Have hung upon the beatings of my  
heart —

How oft, in spirit, have I turned to thee,  
O sylvan Wye! thou wanderer thro' the  
woods,

How often has my spirit turned to thee!  
And now, with gleams of half-extin-  
guished thought,

With many recognitions dim and faint,  
And somewhat of a sad perplexity.

The picture of the mind revives again:

While here I stand, not only with the  
sense

Of present pleasure, but with pleasing  
thoughts

That in this moment there is life and food  
For future years. And so I dare to hope,  
Though changed, no doubt, from what I  
was when first

I came among these hills; when like a  
roe

I bounded o'er the mountains, by the  
sides

Of the deep rivers, and the lonely streams,  
Wherever nature led: more like a man  
Flying from something that he dreads,  
than one

Who sought the thing he loved. For  
nature then

(The coarser pleasures of my boyish days,  
And their glad animal movements all gone  
by)

To me was all in all. — I cannot paint  
What then I was. The sounding cataract  
Haunted me like a passion: the tall rock,  
The mountain, and the deep and gloomy  
wood,

Their colors and their forms, were then  
to me

An appetite; a feeling and a love,  
That had no need of a remoter charm,  
By thought supplied, nor any interest  
Unborrowed from the eye. — That time is  
past,

And all its aching joys are now no more,  
And all its dizzy raptures. Not for this  
Faint I; nor mourn nor murmur; other  
gifts

Have followed; for such loss, I would  
believe,

Abundant recompense. For I have  
learned

To look on nature, not as in the hour  
Of thoughtless youth; but hearing often-  
times

The still, sad music of humanity,  
Not harsh nor grating, though of ample  
power

To chasten and subdue. And I have felt  
A presence that disturbs me with the joy  
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime  
Of something far more deeply interfused,  
Whose dwelling is the light of setting  
suns,

And the round ocean and the living air,  
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man;  
A motion and a spirit, that impels

All thinking things, all objects of all  
thought,

And rolls through all things. Therefore  
am I still

A lover of the meadows and the woods,  
And mountains; and of all that we behold  
From this green earth; of all the mighty  
world

Of eye, and ear, — both what they half  
create,

And what perceive; well pleased to  
recognize

In nature and the language of the sense,  
The anchor of my purest thoughts, the  
nurse,

The guide, the guardian of my heart, and  
soul

Of all my moral being.

Nor perchance,  
If I were not thus taught, should I the  
more

Suffer my genial spirits to decay:  
For thou art with me here upon the banks  
Of this fair river; thou my dearest  
Friend,

My dear, dear Friend; and in thy voice  
I catch

The language of my former heart, and  
read

My former pleasures in the shooting  
lights

Of thy wild eyes. Oh! yet a little while  
May I behold in thee what I was once,  
My dear, dear Sister! and this prayer I  
make,

Knowing that Nature never did betray  
The heart that loved her; 'tis her privi-  
lege,

Through all the years of this our life, to  
lead

From joy to joy: for she can so inform  
The mind that is within us, so impress  
With quietness and beauty, and so feed  
With lofty thoughts, that neither evil  
tongues,

Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish  
men,

Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor  
all

The dreary intercourse of daily life,  
Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb  
Our cheerful faith, that all which we be-  
hold

Is full of blessings. Therefore let the  
moon

Shine on thee in thy solitary walk;

And let the misty mountain-winds be free  
To blow against thee : and, in after years,  
When these wild ecstasies shall be  
matured

Into a sober pleasure ; when thy mind  
Shall be a mansion for all lovely forms,  
Thy memory be as a dwelling-place  
For all sweet sounds and harmonies ; oh !  
then,

If solitude, or fear, or pain, or grief,  
Should be thy portion, with what healing  
thoughts

Of tender joy wilt thou remember me,  
And these my exhortations ! Nor, perchance —

If I should be where I no more can hear  
Thy voice, nor catch from thy wild eyes  
these gleams

Of past existence — wilt thou then forget  
That on the banks of this delightful  
stream

We stood together ; and that I, so long  
A worshipper of Nature, hither came  
Unwearied in that service : rather say  
With warmer love — oh ! with far deeper  
zeal

Of holier love. Nor wilt thou then forget,  
That after many wanderings, many years  
Of absence, these steep woods and lofty  
cliffs,

And this green pastoral landscape, were  
to me

More dear, both for themselves and for  
thy sake ! 1798. 1798.

### THE SIMPLON PASS

——— BROOK and road

Were fellow-travellers in this gloomy  
Pass,

And with them did we journey several  
hours

At a slow step. The immeasurable  
height

Of woods decaying, never to be decayed,  
The stationary blasts of waterfalls,  
And in the narrow rent, at every turn,  
Winds thwarting winds bewildered and  
forlorn,

The torrents shooting from the clear blue  
sky,

The rocks that muttered close upon our  
ears,

Black drizzling crags that spake by the  
wayside

As if a voice were in them, the sick sight  
And giddy prospect of the raving stream,  
The unfettered clouds and region of the  
heavens,

Tumult and peace, the darkness and the  
light —

Were all like workings of one mind, the  
features

Of the same face, blossoms upon one tree,  
Characters of the great Apocalypse,  
The types and symbols of Eternity,  
Of first, and last, and midst, and without  
end. 1799. 1845.

### INFLUENCE OF NATURAL OBJECTS

IN CALLING FORTH AND STRENGTHENING  
THE IMAGINATION IN BOYHOOD AND EARLY  
YOUTH

WISDOM and Spirit of the universe !

Thou Soul, that art the Eternity of  
thought !

And giv'st to forms and images a breath  
And everlasting motion ! not in vain,  
By day or star-light, thus from my first  
dawn

Of childhood didst thou intertwine for me  
The passions that build up our human  
soul ;

Not with the mean and vulgar works of  
Man,

But with high objects, with enduring  
things,

With life and nature ; purifying thus  
The elements of feeling and of thought,  
And sanctifying by such discipline

Both pain and fear, — until we recognize  
A grandeur in the beatings of the heart.

Nor was this fellowship vouchsafed to  
me

With stinted kindness. In November  
days,

When vapors rolling down the valleys  
made

A lovely scene more lonesome ; among  
woods

At noon ; and 'mid the calm of summer  
nights,

When by the margin of the trembling lake,  
Beneath the gloomy hills, homeward I  
went

In solitude, such intercourse was mine :  
Mine was it in the fields both day and  
night,



And by the waters, all the summer long.  
And in the frosty season, when the sun  
Was set, and, visible for many a mile,  
The cottage-windows through the twilight  
light blazed.

I heeded not the summons: happy time  
It was indeed for all of us; for me  
It was a time of rapture! Clear and loud  
The village-clock tolled six — I wheeled  
about,

Proud and exulting like an untired horse  
That cares not for his home. — All shod  
with steel

We hissed along the polished ice, in games  
Confederate, imitative of the chase  
And woodland pleasures, — the resounding  
horn,

The pack loud-chiming, and the hunted  
hare.

So through the darkness and the cold  
we flew,

And not a voice was idle: with the din  
Smitten, the precipices rang aloud;  
The leafless trees and every icy crag  
Tinkled like iron; while far-distant hills  
Into the tumult sent an alien sound  
Of melancholy, not unnoticed while the  
stars,

Eastward, were sparkling clear, and in the  
west

The orange sky in evening died away.

Not seldom from the uproar I retired  
Into a silent bay, or sportively  
Glanced sideways, leaving the tumultuous  
throng,

To cut across the reflex of a star;  
Image, that, flying still before me,  
gleamed

Upon the glassy plain: and oftentimes,  
When we had given our bodies to the  
wind,

And all the shadowy banks on either side  
Came sweeping through the darkness,  
spinning still

The rapid line of motion, then at once  
Have I, reclining back upon my heels,  
Stopped short; yet still the solitary cliffs  
Wheeled by me — even as if the earth had  
rolled

With visible motion her diurnal round!  
Behind me did they stretch in solemn  
train,

Feebler and feebler, and I stood and  
watched

Till all was tranquil as a summer sea.

1799. 1809.

### THERE WAS A BOY

Written in Germany. This is an extract from  
the poem on my own poetical education. (*Words-  
worth. The poem referred to is *The Prelude*.*)

THERE was a Boy; ye knew him well, ye  
cliffs

And islands of Winander! — many a time,  
At evening, when the earliest stars began  
To move along the edges of the hills,  
Rising or setting, would he stand alone,  
Beneath the trees, or by the glimmering  
lake;

And there, with fingers interwoven, both  
hands

Pressed closely palm to palm and to his  
mouth

Uplifted, he, as through an instrument,  
Blew mimic hootings to the silent owls,  
That they might answer him. — And they  
would shout

Across the watery vale, and shout again,  
Responsive to his call, — with quivering  
peals,

And long halloos, and screams, and echoes  
loud

Redoubled and redoubled; concourse  
wild

Of jocund din! And, when there came a  
pause

Of silence such as baffled his best skill,  
Then, sometimes, in that silence, while he  
hung

Listening, a gentle shock of mild surprise  
Has carried far into his heart the voice  
Of mountain-torrents; or the visible  
scene

Would enter unawares into his mind  
With all its solemn imagery, its rocks,  
Its woods, and that uncertain heaven  
received

Into the bosom of the steady lake.

This boy was taken from his mates, and  
died

In childhood, ere he was full twelve years  
old.

Pre-eminent in beauty is the vale  
Where he was born and bred: the church-  
yard hangs

Upon a slope above the village-school;  
And through that church-yard when my  
way has led

On summer-evenings, I believe, that there  
A long half-hour together I have stood  
Mute — looking at the grave in which he  
lies!

1798. 1800.



### NUTTING

Written in Germany; intended as part of a poem on my own life, but struck out as not being wanted there. . . . (*Wordsworth.*)

— It seems a day  
(I speak of one from many singled out)  
One of those heavenly days that cannot die;  
When, in the eagerness of boyish hope,  
I left our cottage-threshold, sallying forth  
With a huge wallet o'er my shoulders slung,  
A nutting-crook in hand; and turned my steps  
Tow'rd some far-distant wood, a Figure quaint,  
Tricked out in proud disguise of cast-off weeds  
Which for that service had been husbanded,  
By exhortation of my frugal Dame —  
Motley accoutrement, of power to smile  
At thorns, and brakes, and brambles —  
and, in truth,  
More ragged than need was! O'er pathless rocks,  
Through beds of matted fern, and tangled thickets,  
Forcing my way, I came to one dear nook  
Unvisited, where not a broken bough  
Drooped with its withered leaves, ungracious sign  
Of devastation; but the hazels rose  
Tall and erect, with tempting clusters hung,  
A virgin scene! — A little while I stood,  
Breathing with such suppression of the heart  
As joy delights in; and, with wise restraint  
Voluptuous, fearless of a rival, eyed  
The banquet; — or beneath the trees I sate  
Among the flowers, and with the flowers I played;  
A temper known to those, who, after long  
And weary expectation, have been blest  
With sudden happiness beyond all hope.  
Perhaps it was a bower beneath whose leaves  
The violets of five seasons re-appear  
And fade, unseen by any human eye;  
Where fairy water-breaks do murmur on  
For ever; and I saw the sparkling foam,  
And — with my cheek on one of those  
green stones

That, fleeced with moss, under the shady trees,  
Lay round me, scattered like a flock of sheep —  
I heard the murmur and the murmuring sound,  
In that sweet mood when pleasure loves to pay  
Tribute to ease; and, of its joy secure,  
The heart luxuriates with indifferent things,  
Wasting its kindliness on stocks and stones  
And on the vacant air. Then up I rose,  
And dragged to earth both branch and bough, with crash  
And merciless ravage: and the shady nook  
Of hazels, and the green and mossy bower,  
Deformed and sullied, patiently gave up  
Their quiet being: and, unless I now  
Confound my present feelings with the past;  
Ere from the mutilated bower I turned  
Exulting, rich beyond the wealth of kings,  
I felt a sense of pain when I beheld  
The silent trees, and saw the intruding sky. —  
Then, dearest Maiden, move along these shades  
In gentleness of heart; with gentle hand  
Touch — for there is a spirit in the woods.

1799. 1800.

### STRANGE FITS OF PASSION HAVE I KNOWN

The next three poems were written in Germany.  
(*Wordsworth.*)

STRANGE fits of passion have I known:  
And I will dare to tell,  
But in the Lover's ear alone,  
What once to me befell.

When she I loved looked every day  
Fresh as a rose in June,  
I to her cottage bent my way,  
Beneath an evening-moon.

Upon the moon I fixed my eye,  
All over the wide lea;  
With quickening pace my horse drew nigh  
Those paths so dear to me.

And now we reached the orchard-plot;  
And, as we climbed the hill,  
The sinking moon to Lucy's cot  
Came near, and nearer still.

In one of those sweet dreams I slept,  
Kind Nature's gentlest boon!  
And all the while my eyes I kept  
On the descending moon.

My horse moved on; hoof after hoof  
He raised, and never stopped:  
When down behind the cottage roof,  
At once, the bright moon dropped.

What fond and wayward thoughts will  
slide

Into a Lover's head!

"O mercy!" to myself I cried,  
"If Lucy should be dead!"

1799. 1800.

### SHE DWELT AMONG THE UNTRODDEN WAYS

SHE dwelt among the untrodden ways  
Beside the springs of Dove,  
A Maid whom there were none to praise  
And very few to love:  
A violet by a mossy stone  
Half hidden from the eye!  
— Fair as a star, when only one  
Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know  
When Lucy ceased to be;  
But she is in her grave, and, oh,  
The difference to me!

1799. 1800.

### I TRAVELLED AMONG UNKNOWN MEN

I TRAVELLED among unknown men,  
In lands beyond the sea;  
Nor, England! did I know till then  
What love I bore to thee.

'Tis past, that melancholy dream!  
Nor will I quit thy shore  
A second time; for still I seem  
To love thee more and more.

Among the mountains did I feel  
The joy of my desire;  
And she I cherished turned her wheel  
Beside an English fire.

Thy mornings showed, thy nights concealed

The bowers where Lucy played;  
And thine too is the last green field  
That Lucy's eyes surveyed.

1799. 1807.

### THREE YEARS SHE GREW IN SUN AND SHOWER

THREE years she grew in sun and shower,  
Then Nature said, "A lovelier flower  
On earth was never sown;  
This Child I to myself will take;  
She shall be mine, and I will make  
A Lady of my own.

"Myself will to my darling be  
Both law and impulse: and with me  
The Girl, in rock and plain,  
In earth and heaven, in glade and bower,  
Shall feel an overseeing power  
To kindle or restrain.

"She shall be sportive as the fawn  
That wild with glee across the lawn,  
Or up the mountain springs;  
And hers shall be the breathing balm,  
And hers the silence and the calm  
Of mute insensate things.

"The floating clouds their state shall lend  
To her; for her the willow bend;  
Nor shall she fail to see  
Even in the motions of the Storm  
Grace that shall mould the Maiden's form  
By silent sympathy.

"The stars of midnight shall be dear  
To her; and she shall lean her ear  
In many a secret place  
Where rivulets dance their wayward  
round,  
And beauty born of murmuring sound  
Shall pass into her face.

"And vital feelings of delight  
Shall rear her form to stately height,  
Her virgin bosom swell;  
Such thoughts to Lucy I will give  
While she and I together live  
Here in this happy dell."

Thus Nature spake. — The work was  
done —  
How soon my Lucy's race was run!

She died, and left to me  
This heath, this calm and quiet scene;  
The memory of what has been,  
And never more will be.

1799. 1800.

### A SLUMBER DID MY SPIRIT SEAL

A SLUMBER did my spirit seal;  
I had no human fears:  
She seemed a thing that could not feel  
The touch of earthly years.

No motion has she now, no force;  
She neither hears nor sees;  
Rolled round in earth's diurnal course,  
With rocks, and stones, and trees.

1799. 1800.

### A POET'S EPITAPH

ART thou a Statist in the van  
Of public conflicts trained and bred?  
— First learn to love one living man;  
Then may'st thou think upon the dead.

A Lawyer art thou? — draw not nigh!  
Go, carry to some fitter place  
The keenness of that practised eye,  
The hardness of that sallow face.

Art thou a Man of purple cheer?  
A rosy Man, right plump to see?  
Approach; yet, Doctor, not too near,  
This grave no cushion is for thee.

Or art thou one of gallant pride,  
A Soldier and no man of chaff?  
Welcome! — but lay thy sword aside,  
And lean upon a peasant's staff.

Physician art thou? one all eyes,  
Philosopher! a fingering slave,  
One that would peep and botanize  
Upon his mother's grave?

Wrapt closely in thy sensual fleece,  
O turn aside, — and take, I pray,  
That he below may rest in peace,  
Thy ever-dwindling soul away!

A Moralist perchance appears;  
Led, Heaven knows how! to this poor  
sod:

And he has neither eyes nor ears;  
Himself his world, and his own God;

One to whose smooth-rubbed soul can  
cling  
Nor form, nor feeling, great or small!  
A reasoning, self-sufficing thing,  
An intellectual All-in-all!

Shut close the door; press down the  
latch;  
Sleep in thy intellectual crust;  
Nor lose ten tickings of thy watch  
Near this unprofitable dust.

But who is he, with modest looks,  
And clad in homely russet brown?  
He murmurs near the running brooks  
A music sweeter than their own.

He is retired as noontide dew,  
Or fountain in a noon-day grove;  
And you must love him, ere to you  
He will seem worthy of your love.

The outward shows of sky and earth,  
Of hill and valley, he has viewed;  
And impulses of deeper birth  
Have come to him in solitude.

In common things that round us lie  
Some random truths he can impart, —  
The harvest of a quiet eye  
That broods and sleeps on his own heart.

But he is weak; both Man and Boy,  
Hath been an idler in the land;  
Contented if he might enjoy  
The things which others understand.

— Come hither in thy hour of strength;  
Come, weak as is a breaking wave!  
Here stretch thy body at full length;  
Or build thy house upon this grave.

1799. 1800.

### MATTHEW

In the School of — is a tablet, on which are  
inscribed, in gilt letters, the Names of the several  
persons who have been Schoolmasters there since  
the foundation of the School, with the time at which  
they entered upon and quitted their office. Op-  
posite to one of those names the Author wrote the  
following lines.

Such a Tablet as is here spoken of continued to be  
preserved in Hawkshead School, though the inscrip-  
tions were not brought down to our time. This  
and other poems connected with Matthew would  
not gain by a literal detail of facts. Like the  
Wanderer in "The Excursion," this Schoolmaster  
was made up of several both of his class and men of

other occupations. I do not ask pardon for what there is of untruth in such verses, considered strictly as matters of fact. It is enough if, being true and consistent in spirit, they move and teach in a manner not unworthy of a Poet's calling. (*Wordsworth.*)

If Nature, for a favorite child,  
In thee hath tempered so her clay,  
That every hour thy heart runs wild,  
Yet never once doth go astray,

Read o'er these lines; and then review  
This tablet, that thus humbly rears  
In such diversity of hue  
Its history of two hundred years.

— When through this little wreck of fame,  
Cipher and syllable! thine eye  
Has travelled down to Matthew's name,  
Pause with no common sympathy.

And, if a sleeping tear should wake,  
Then be it neither checked nor stayed:  
For Matthew a request I make  
Which for himself he hath not made.

Poor Matthew, all his frolics o'er,  
Is silent as a standing pool;  
Far from the chimney's merry roar,  
And murmur of the village school.

The sighs which Matthew heaved were  
Of one tired out with fun and madness;  
The tears which came to Matthew's eyes  
Were tears of light, the dew of gladness.

Yet, sometimes, when the secret cup  
Of still and serious thought went round,  
It seemed as if he drank it up —  
He felt with spirit so profound.

— Thou soul of God's best earthly mould!  
Thou happy Soul! and can it be  
That these two words of glittering gold  
Are all that must remain of thee?

1799. 1800.

### THE TWO APRIL MORNINGS

We walked along, while bright and red  
Uprose the morning sun;  
And Matthew stopped, he looked, and  
said,  
"The will of God be done!"

A village schoolmaster was he,  
With hair of glittering gray;  
As blithe a man as you could see  
On a spring holiday.

And on that morning, through the grass,  
And by the steaming rills,  
We travelled merrily, to pass  
A day among the hills.

"Our work," said I, "was well begun,  
Then, from thy breast what thought,  
Beneath so beautiful a sun,  
So sad a sigh has brought?"

A second time did Matthew stop;  
And fixing still his eye  
Upon the eastern mountain-top,  
To me he made reply:

"Yon cloud with that long purple cleft  
Brings fresh into my mind  
A day like this which I have left  
Full thirty years behind.

"And just above yon slope of corn  
Such colors, and no other,  
Were in the sky, that April morn,  
Of this the very brother.

"With rod and line I sued the sport  
Which that sweet season gave,  
And, to the church-yard come, stopped  
short  
Beside my daughter's grave.

"Nine summers had she scarcely seen,  
The pride of all the vale;  
And then she sang; — she would have  
been  
A very nightingale.

"Six feet in earth my Emma lay;  
And yet I loved her more,  
For so it seemed, than till that day  
I e'er had loved before.

"And, turning from her grave, I met,  
Beside the church-yard yew,  
A blooming Girl, whose hair was wet  
With points of morning dew,

"A basket on her head she bare;  
Her brow was smooth and white:  
To see a child so very fair,  
It was a pure delight!

"No fountain from its rocky cave  
E'er tripped with foot so free;  
She seemed as happy as a wave  
That dances on the sea;

"There came from me a sigh of pain  
Which I could ill confine;  
I looked at her, and looked again:  
And did not wish her mine!"

Matthew is in his grave, yet now,  
Methinks, I see him stand,  
As at that moment, with a bough  
Of wilding in his hand.

1799. 1800.

### THE FOUNTAIN

#### A CONVERSATION

WE talked with open heart, and tongue  
Affectionate and true,  
A pair of friends, though I was young,  
And Matthew seventy-two.

We lay beneath a spreading oak,  
Beside a mossy seat;  
And from the turf a fountain broke,  
And gurgled at our feet.

"Now, Matthew!" said I, "let us match  
This water's pleasant tune  
With some old border-song, or catch  
That suits a summer's noon;

"Or of the church-clock and the chimes  
Sing here beneath the shade,  
That half-mad thing of witty rhymes  
Which you last April made!"

In silence Matthew lay, and eyed  
The spring beneath the tree;  
And thus the dear old Man replied,  
The gray-haired man of glee:

"No check, no stay, this Streamlet fears;  
How merrily it goes!  
'Twill murmur on a thousand years,  
And flow as now it flows.

"And here, on this delightful day,  
I cannot choose but think  
How oft, a vigorous man, I lay  
Beside this fountain's brink.

"My eyes are dim with childish tears,  
My heart is idly stirred,  
For the same sound is in my ears  
Which in those days I heard,

"Thus fares it still in our decay:  
And yet the wiser mind  
Mourns less for what age takes away  
Than what it leaves behind.

"The blackbird amid leafy trees,  
The lark above the hill,  
Let loose their carols when they please,  
Are quiet when they will.

"With Nature never do *they* wage  
A foolish strife; they see  
A happy youth, and their old age  
Is beautiful and free:

"But we are pressed by heavy laws;  
And often, glad no more,  
We wear a face of joy, because  
We have been glad of yore.

"If there be one who need bemoan  
His kindred laid in earth,  
The household hearts that were his own;  
It is the man of mirth.

"My days, my Friend, are almost gone,  
My life has been approved,  
And many love me; but by none  
Am I enough beloved."

"Now both himself and me he wrongs,  
The man who thus complains;  
I live and sing my idle songs  
Upon these happy plains;

"And, Matthew, for thy children dead  
I'll be a son to thee!"  
At this he grasped my hand, and said,  
"Alas! that cannot be."

We rose up from the fountain-side;  
And down the smooth descent  
Of the green sheep-track did we glide;  
And through the wood we went;

And, ere we came to Leonard's rock,  
He sang those witty rhymes  
About the crazy old church-clock,  
And the bewildered chimes.

1799. 1800.



## LUCY GRAY

## OR, SOLITUDE

Written at Goslar in Germany. It was founded on a circumstance told me by my Sister, of a little girl who, not far from Halifax in Yorkshire, was bewildered in a snow-storm. Her footsteps were traced by her parents to the middle of the lock of a canal, and no other vestige of her, backward or forward, could be traced. The body however was found in the canal. The way in which the incident was treated and the spiritualizing of the character might furnish hints for contrasting the imaginative influences which I have endeavored to throw over common life with Crabbe's matter of fact style of treating subjects of the same kind. This is not spoken to his disparagement, far from it, but to direct the attention of thoughtful readers, into whose hands these notes may fall, to a comparison that may both enlarge the circle of their sensibilities, and tend to produce in them a catholic judgment. (*Wordsworth.*)

See also Henry Crabb Robinson's *Diary*, September 11, 1816.

OfT I had heard of Lucy Gray :  
And, when I crossed the wild,  
I chanced to see at break of day  
The solitary child.

No mate, no comrade Lucy knew ;  
She dwelt on a wide moor,  
— The sweetest thing that ever grew  
Beside a human door !

You yet may spy the fawn at play,  
The hare upon the green ;  
But the sweet face of Lucy Gray  
Will never more be seen.

"To-night will be a stormy night —  
You to the town must go ;  
And take a lantern, Child, to light  
Your mother through the snow."

"That, Father ! will I gladly do :  
'Tis scarcely afternoon —  
The minster-clock has just struck two,  
And yonder is the moon !"

At this the Father raised his hook,  
And snapped a fagot band ;  
He plied his work ; — and Lucy took  
The lantern in her hand.

Not blither is the mountain roe :  
With many a wanton stroke  
Her feet disperse the powdery snow,  
That rises up like smoke.

The storm came on before its time :  
She wandered up and down ;  
And many a hill did Lucy climb :  
But never reached the town.

The wretched parents all that night  
Went shouting far and wide ;  
But there was neither sound nor sight  
To serve them for a guide.

At daybreak on the hill they stood  
That overlooked the moor ;  
And thence they saw the bridge of wood,  
A furlong from their door.

They wept — and, turning homeward,  
cried,  
"In heaven we all shall meet ;"  
— When in the snow the mother spied  
The print of Lucy's feet.

Then downwards from the steep hill's  
edge  
They tracked the footmarks small ;  
And through the broken hawthorn hedge,  
And by the long stone-wall ;

And then an open field they crossed :  
The marks were still the same ;  
They tracked them on, nor ever lost ;  
And to the bridge they came.

They followed from the snowy bank  
Those footmarks, one by one,  
Into the middle of the plank ;  
And further there were none !

— Yet some maintain that to this day  
She is a living child ;  
That you may see sweet Lucy Gray  
Upon the lonesome wild.

O'er rough and smooth she trips along,  
And never looks behind ;  
And sings a solitary song  
That whistles in the wind.

1799. 1800.

MICHAEL

A PASTORAL POEM

Written at Town-end, Grasmere, about the same time as "The Brothers." The Sheepfold, on which so much of the poem turns, remains, or rather the ruins of it. The character and circumstances of Luke were taken from a family to whom had be-

longed, many years before, the house we lived in at Town-end, along with some fields and woodlands on the eastern shore of Grasmere. The name of the Evening Star was not in fact given to this house, but to another on the same side of the valley, more to the north. (*Wordsworth.*)

If from the public way you turn your steps  
Up the tumultuous brook of Greenhead  
Ghyll,  
You will suppose that with an upright  
path  
Your feet must struggle; in such bold  
ascent  
The pastoral mountains front you, face  
to face.  
But, courage! for around that boisterous  
brook  
The mountains have all opened out them-  
selves,  
And made a hidden valley of their own.  
No habitation can be seen; but they  
Who journey thither find themselves  
alone  
With a few sheep, with rocks and stones,  
and kites  
That overhead are sailing in the sky.  
It is in truth an utter solitude;  
Nor should I have made mention of this  
Dell  
But for one object which you might pass  
by,  
Might see and notice not. Beside the  
brook  
Appears a straggling heap of unhewn  
stones!  
And to that simple object appertains  
A story — unenriched with strange events,  
Yet not unfit, I deem, for the fireside,  
Or for the summer shade. It was the first  
Of those domestic tales that spake to me  
Of shepherds, dwellers in the valleys, men  
Whom I already loved; not verily  
For their own sakes, but for the fields and  
hills  
Where was their occupation and abode.  
And hence this Tale, while I was yet a  
Boy  
Careless of books, yet having felt the  
power  
Of Nature, by the gentle agency  
Of natural objects, led me on to feel  
For passions that were not my own, and  
think  
(At random and imperfectly indeed)  
On man, the heart of man, and human  
life.

Therefore, although it be a history  
Homely and rude, I will relate the same  
For the delight of a few natural hearts;  
And, with yet fonder feeling, for the sake  
Of youthful Poets, who among these hills  
Will be my second self when I am gone.

UPON the forest-side in Grasmere Vale  
There dwelt a Shepherd, Michael was his  
name;  
An old man, stout of heart, and strong of  
limb.  
His bodily frame had been from youth to  
age  
Of an unusual strength: his mind was  
keen,  
Intense, and frugal, apt for all affairs,  
And in his shepherd's calling he was  
prompt  
And watchful more than ordinary men.  
Hence had he learned the meaning of all  
winds,  
Of blasts of every tone; and, oftentimes,  
When others heeded not, He heard the  
South  
Make subterraneous music, like the noise  
Of bagpipers on distant Highland hills.  
The Shepherd, at such warning, of his  
flock  
Bethought him, and he to himself would  
say,  
"The winds are now devising work for  
me!"  
And, truly, at all times, the storm that  
drives  
The traveller to shelter, summoned him  
Up to the mountains: he had been alone  
Amid the heart of many thousand mists,  
That came to him, and left him, on the  
heights.  
So lived he till his eightieth year was past.  
And grossly the man errs, who would  
suppose  
That the green valleys, and the streams  
and rocks,  
Were things indifferent to the Shepherd's  
thoughts.  
Fields, where with cheerful spirits he had  
breathed  
The common air; hills, which with vigor-  
ous step  
He had so often climbed; which had  
impressed  
So many incidents upon his mind  
Of hardship, skill or courage, joy or fear;  
Which, like a book, preserved the memory

Of the dumb animals whom he had saved,  
 Had fed or sheltered, linking to such acts  
 The certainty of honorable gain;  
 Those fields, those hills — what could  
   they less? — had laid  
 Strong hold on his affections, were to him  
 A pleasurable feeling of blind love,  
 The pleasure which there is in life itself.  
   His days had not been passed in single-  
   ness.

His Helpmate was a comely matron,  
 old —

Though younger than himself full twenty  
 years.

She was a woman of a stirring life,  
 Whose heart was in her house: two  
   wheels she had

Of antique form: this large, for spinning  
 wool;

That small, for flax; and if one wheel had  
 rest

It was because the other was at work.

The Pair had but one inmate in their  
 house,

An only Child, who had been born to  
 them

When Michael, telling o'er his years,  
 began

To deem that he was old, — in shepherd's  
 phrase,

With one foot in the grave. This only  
 Son.

With two brave sheep-dogs tried in many  
 a storm,

The one of an inestimable worth,  
 Made all their household. I may truly  
 say,

That they were as a proverb in the vale  
 For endless industry. When day was  
 gone,

And from their occupations out of doors  
 The Son and Father were come home,  
   even then,

Their labor did not cease: unless when all  
 Turned to the cleanly supper-board, and  
   there,

Each with a mess of pottage and skimmed  
 milk,

Sat round the basket piled with oaten  
 cakes,

And their plain home-made cheese. Yet  
   when the meal

Was ended, Luke (for so the Son was  
 named)

And his old Father both betook them-  
   selves

To such convenient work as might employ  
 Their hands by the fireside; perhaps to  
 card

Wool for the Housewife's spindle, or  
 repair

Some injury done to sickle, flail, or scythe,  
 Or other implement of house or field.

Down from the ceiling, by the chim-  
 ney's edge,

That in our ancient uncouth country style  
 With huge and black projection over-  
   browed

Large space beneath, as duly as the light  
 Of day grew dim the Housewife hung a  
 lamp;

An aged utensil, which had performed  
 Service beyond all others of its kind.

Early at evening did it burn — and late,  
 Surviving comrade of uncounted hours,  
 Which, going by from year to year, had  
   found,

And left, the couple neither gay perhaps  
 Nor cheerful, yet with objects and with  
   hopes,

Living a life of eager industry.

And now, when Luke had reached his  
 eighteenth year,

There by the light of this old lamp they  
 sate,

Father and Son, while far into the night  
 The Housewife plied her own peculiar  
 work,

Making the cottage through the silent  
 hours

Murmur as with the sound of summer  
 flies.

This light was famous in its neighborhood,  
 And was a public symbol of the life  
 That thrifty Pair had lived. For, as it  
 chanced,

Their cottage on a plot of rising ground  
 Stood single, with large prospect, north  
   and south,

High into Easedale, up to Dunmail-Raise,  
 And westward to the village near the lake.  
 And from this constant light, so regular

And so far seen, the House itself, by all  
 Who dwelt within the limits of the vale,  
 Both old and young, was named THE

EVENING STAR.

Thus living on through such a length of  
 years,

The Shepherd, if he loved himself, must  
 needs

Have loved his Helpmate; but to Mi-  
 chael's heart

This son of his old age was yet more  
dear —

Less from instinctive tenderness, the same  
Fond spirit that blindly works in the  
blood of all —

Than that a child, more than all other  
gifts

That earth can offer to declining man,  
Brings hope with it, and forward-looking  
thoughts,

And stirrings of inquietude, when they  
By tendency of nature needs must fail.  
Exceeding was the love he bare to him,  
His heart and his heart's joy! For often-  
times

Old Michael, while he was a babe in arms,  
Had done him female service, not alone  
For pastime and delight, as is the use  
Of fathers, but with patient mind en-  
forced

To acts of tenderness; and he had rocked  
His cradle, as with a woman's gentle hand.

And, in a later time, ere yet the Boy  
Had put on boy's attire, did Michael love,  
Albeit of a stern unbending mind,  
To have the Young-one in his sight, when  
he

Wrought in the field, or on his shepherd's  
stool

Sate with a fettered sheep before him  
stretched

Under the large old oak, that near his  
door

Stood single, and, from matchless depth  
of shade,

Chosen for the Shearer's covert from the  
sun,

Thence in our rustic dialect was called  
The CLIPPING TREE,<sup>1</sup> a name which yet  
it bears.

There, while they two were sitting in the  
shade,

With others round them, earnest all and  
blithe,

Would Michael exercise his heart with  
looks

Of fond correction and reproof bestowed  
Upon the Child, if he disturbed the sheep  
By catching at their legs, or with his  
shouts

Scared them, while they lay still beneath  
the shears.

And when by Heaven's good grace the  
boy grew up

A healthy Lad, and carried in his cheek  
Two steady roses that were five years old;  
Then Michael from a winter coppice cut  
With his own hand a sapling, which he  
hooped

With iron, making it throughout in all  
Due requisites a perfect shepherd's staff,  
And gave it to the Boy; wherewith  
equipt

He as a watchman oftentimes was placed  
At gate or gap, to stem or turn the flock;  
And, to his office prematurely called,  
There stood the urchin, as you will divine,  
Something between a hindrance and a  
help;

And for this cause not always, I believe,  
Receiving from his Father hire of praise;  
Though nought was left undone which  
staff, or voice,

Or looks, or threatening gestures, could  
perform.

But soon as Luke, full ten years old,  
could stand

Against the mountain blasts; and to the  
heights,

Not fearing toil, nor length of weary ways,  
He with his Father daily went, and they  
Were as companions, why should I relate  
That objects which the Shepherd loved  
before

Were dearer now? that from the Boy  
there came

Feelings and emanations — things which  
were

Light to the sun and music to the wind;  
And that the old Man's heart seemed  
born again?

Thus in his Father's sight the Boy grew  
up:

And now, when he had reached his eigh-  
teenth year,

He was his comfort and his daily hope.

While in this sort the simple household  
lived

From day to day, to Michael's ear there  
came

Distressful tidings. Long before the time  
Of which I speak, the Shepherd had been  
bound

In surety for his brother's son, a man  
Of an industrious life, and ample means;  
But unforeseen misfortunes suddenly  
Had prest upon him; and old Michael  
now

Was summoned to discharge the for-  
feiture,

<sup>1</sup> Clipping is the word used in the North of Eng-  
land for shearing. (*Wordsworth*.)



A grievous penalty, but little less  
Than half his substance. This unlooked-  
for claim,

At the first hearing, for a moment took  
More hope out of his life than he supposed  
That any old man ever could have lost.  
As soon as he had armed himself with  
strength

To look his trouble in the face, it seemed  
The Shepherd's sole resource to sell at  
once

A portion of his patrimonial fields.  
Such was his first resolve; he thought  
again,

And his heart failed him. "Isabel," said  
he,

Two evenings after he had heard the  
news,

"I have been toiling more than seventy  
years,

And in the open sunshine of God's love  
Have we all lived; yet if these fields of  
ours

Should pass into a stranger's hand, I  
think

That I could not lie quiet in my grave.  
Our lot is a hard lot; the sun himself  
Has scarcely been more diligent than I;  
And I have lived to be a fool at last  
To my own family. An evil man  
That was, and made an evil choice, if he  
Were false to us; and if he were not false,  
There are ten thousand to whom loss like  
this

Had been no sorrow. I forgive him; — but  
'Twere better to be dumb than to talk  
thus.

"When I began, my purpose was to  
speak

Of remedies and of a cheerful hope.  
Our Luke shall leave us, Isabel; the land  
Shall not go from us, and it shall be free;  
He shall possess it, free as is the wind  
That passes over it. We have, thou  
know'st,

Another kinsman — he will be our friend  
In this distress. He is a prosperous man,  
Thriving in trade — and Luke to him  
shall go,

And with his kinsman's help and his own  
thrift

He quickly will repair this loss, and then  
He may return to us. If here he stay,  
What can be done? Where everyone is  
poor,

What can be gained?"

At this the old Man paused,  
And Isabel sat silent, for her mind  
Was busy, looking back into past times.  
There's Richard Bateman, thought she to  
herself,

He was a parish-boy — at the church-  
door

They made a gathering for him, shillings,  
pence

And halfpennies, wherewith the neighbors  
bought

A basket, which they filled with pedlar's  
wares;

And, with this basket on his arm, the lad  
Went up to London, found a master there,  
Who, out of many, chose the trusty boy  
To go and overlook his merchandise  
Beyond the seas; where he grew won-  
drous rich,

And left estates and monies to the poor  
And, at his birthplace, built a chapel,  
floored

With marble which he sent from foreign  
lands.

These thoughts, and many others of like  
sort,

Passed quickly through the mind of  
Isabel,

And her face brightened. The old Man  
was glad.

And thus resumed: — "Well, Isabel!  
this scheme

These two days, has been meat and drink  
to me.

Far more than we have lost is left us yet.  
— We have enough — I wish indeed that  
I

Were younger; — but this hope is a good  
hope.

— Make ready Luke's best garments, of  
the best

Buy for him more, and let us send him  
forth

To-morrow, or the next day, or to-night:  
— If he *could* go, the boy should go to-  
night."

Here Michael ceased, and to the fields  
went forth

With a light heart. The Housewife for  
five days

Was restless morn and night, and all day  
long

Wrought on with her best fingers to pre-  
pare

Things needful for the journey of her son.  
But Isabel was glad when Sunday came



To stop her in her work : for, when she lay  
 By Michael's side, she through the last  
     two nights  
 Heard him, how he was troubled in his  
     sleep :  
 And when they rose at morning she could  
     see  
 That all his hopes were gone. That day  
     at noon  
 She said to Luke, while they two by them-  
     selves  
 Were sitting at the door, "Thou must not  
     go :  
 We have no other child but thee to lose,  
 None to remember — do not go away,  
 For if thou leave thy Father he will die."  
 The Youth made answer with a jocund  
     voice ;  
 And Isabel, when she had told her fears,  
 Recovered heart. That evening her best  
     fare  
 Did she bring forth, and all together sat  
 Like happy people round a Christmas fire.  
 With daylight Isabel resumed her  
     work ;  
 And all the ensuing week the house  
     appeared  
 As cheerful as a grove in Spring : at  
     length  
 The expected letter from their kinsman  
     came,  
 With kind assurances that he would do  
 His utmost for the welfare of the Boy ;  
 To which, requests were added, that forth-  
     with  
 He might be sent to him. Ten times or  
     more  
 The letter was read over ; Isabel  
 Went forth to show it to the neighbors  
     round ;  
 Nor was there at that time on English land  
 A prouder heart than Luke's. When  
     Isabel  
 Had to her house returned, the old Man  
     said,  
 "He shall depart to-morrow." To this  
     word  
 The Housewife answered, talking much of  
     things  
 Which, if at such short notice he should  
     go,  
 Would surely be forgotten. But at  
     length  
 She gave consent, and Michael was at ease.  
 Near the tumultuous brook of Green-  
     head Ghyll,

In that deep valley, Michael had designed  
 To build a Sheepfold ; and, before he  
     heard  
 The tidings of his melancholy loss,  
 For this same purpose he had gathered up  
 A heap of stones, which by the streamlet's  
     edge  
 Lay thrown together, ready for the work.  
 With Luke that evening thitherward he  
     walked :  
 And soon as they had reached the place  
     he stopped,  
 And thus the old Man spake to him : —  
     " My Son,  
 To-morrow thou wilt leave me : with full  
     heart  
 I look upon thee, for thou art the same  
 That wert a promise to me ere thy birth,  
 And all thy life hast been my daily joy.  
 I will relate to thee some little part  
 Of our two histories ; 'twill do thee good  
 When thou art from me, even if I should  
     touch  
 On things thou canst not know of. —  
     After thou  
 First cam'st into the world — as oft  
     befalls  
 To new-born infants — thou didst sleep  
     away  
 Two days, and blessings from thy Father's  
     tongue  
 Then fell upon thee. Day by day passed  
     on,  
 And still I loved thee with increasing love.  
 Never to living ear came sweeter sounds  
 Than when I heard thee by our own fire-  
     side  
 First uttering, without words, a natural  
     tune ;  
 While thou, a feeding babe, didst in thy  
     joy  
 Sing at thy Mother's breast. Month fol-  
     lowed month,  
 And in the open fields my life was passed  
 And on the mountains ; else I think that  
     thou  
 Hadst been brought up upon thy Father's  
     knees.  
 But we were playmates, Luke : among  
     these hills,  
 As well thou knowest, in us the old and  
     young  
 Have played together, nor with me didst  
     thou  
 Lack any pleasure which a boy can  
     know."

Luke **had** a manly heart; but at these words  
 He sobbed aloud. The old Man grasped his hand,  
 And said, "Nay, do not take it so — I see  
 That these are things of which I need not speak.  
 — Even to the utmost I have been to thee  
 A kind and a good Father: and herein  
 I but repay a gift which I myself  
 Received at others' hands; for, though  
 now old  
 Beyond the common life of man, I still  
 Remember them who loved me in my youth.  
 Both of them sleep together: here they  
 lived,  
 As all their Forefathers had done; and  
 when  
 At length their time was come, they  
 were not loth  
 To give their bodies to the family mould.  
 I wished that thou should'st live the life  
 they lived:  
 But, 'tis a long time to look back, my  
 Son,  
 And see so little gain from threescore  
 years.  
 These fields were burthened when they  
 came to me;  
 Till I was forty years of age, not more  
 Than half of my inheritance was mine.  
 I toiled and toiled; God blessed me in  
 my work,  
 And till these three weeks past the land  
 was free.  
 — It looks as if it never could endure  
 Another Master. Heaven forgive me,  
 Luke,  
 If I judge ill for thee, but it seems good  
 That thou should'st go."  
 At this the old Man paused;  
 Then, pointing to the stones near which  
 they stood,  
 Thus, after a short silence, he resumed:  
 "This was a work for us; and now, my  
 Son,  
 It is a work for me. But, lay one stone —  
 Here, lay it for me, Luke, with thine  
 own hands.  
 Nay, Boy, be of good hope; — we both  
 may live  
 To see a better day. At eighty-four  
 I still am strong and hale; — do thou thy  
 part;  
 I will do mine. — I will begin again

With many tasks that were resigned to  
 thee:  
 Up to the heights, and in among the  
 storms,  
 Will I without thee go again, and do  
 All works which I was wont to do alone,  
 Before I knew thy face. — Heaven bless  
 thee, Boy!  
 Thy heart these two weeks has been  
 beating fast  
 With many hopes; it should be so — yes  
 — yes —  
 I knew that thou could'st never have a  
 wish  
 To leave me, Luke: thou hast been  
 bound to me  
 Only by links of love: when thou art  
 gone,  
 What will be left to us! — But, I forget  
 My purposes. Lay now the corner-stone,  
 As I requested; and hereafter, Luke,  
 When thou art gone away, should evil  
 men  
 Be thy companions, think of me, my Son,  
 And of **this** moment; hither turn thy  
 thoughts,  
 And God will strengthen thee: amid all  
 fear  
 And all temptation, Luke, I pray that  
 thou  
 May'st bear in mind the life thy Fathers  
 lived,  
 Who, being innocent, did for that cause  
 Bestir them in good deeds. Now, fare  
 thee well —  
 When thou return'st, thou in this place  
 wilt see  
 A work which is not here: a covenant  
 'Twill be between us; but, whatever fate  
 Befall thee, I shall love thee to the last,  
 And bear thy memory with me to the  
 grave."  
 The Shepherd ended here; and Luke  
 stopped down,  
 And, as his Father had requested, laid  
 The first stone of the Sheepfold. At the  
 sight  
 The old Man's grief broke from him; to  
 his heart  
 He pressed his Son, he kissed him and  
 wept;  
 And to the house together they returned.  
 — Hushed was that House in peace, or  
 seeming peace,  
 Ere the night fell: — with morrow's dawn  
 the Boy

Began his journey, and when he had reached

The public way, he put on a bold face;  
And all the neighbors, as he passed their doors,

Came forth with wishes and with farewell prayers,

That followed him till he was out of sight.

A good report did from their Kinsman come,

Of Luke and his well-doing: and the Boy  
Wrote loving letters, full of wondrous news,

Which, as the Housewife phrased it, were throughout

"The prettiest letters that were ever seen."

Both parents read them with rejoicing hearts.

So, many months passed on: and once again

The Shepherd went about his daily work  
With confident and cheerful thoughts;  
and now

Sometimes when he could find a leisure hour

He to that valley took his way, and there  
Wrought at the Sheepfold. Meantime Luke began

To slacken in his duty; and, at length,  
He in the dissolute city gave himself

To evil courses: ignominy and shame  
Fell on him, so that he was driven at last

To seek a hiding-place beyond the seas.

There is a comfort in the strength of love;

'Twill make a thing endurable, which else  
Would overset the brain, or break the heart:

I have conversed with more than one  
who well

Remember the old Man, and what he was  
Years after he had heard this heavy news.  
His bodily frame had been from youth  
to age

Of an unusual strength. Among the  
rocks

He went, and still looked up to sun and  
cloud,

And listened to the wind; and, as before,  
Performed all kinds of labor for his sheep,

And for the land, his small inheritance.  
And to that hollow dell from time to time

Did he repair, to build the Fold of which  
His flock had need. 'Tis not forgotten yet

The pity which was then in every heart

For the old Man — and 'tis believed by all  
That many and many a day he thither  
went,

And never lifted up a single stone.

There, by the Sheepfold, sometimes  
was he seen

Sitting alone, or with his faithful Dog,

Then old, beside him, lying at his feet.

The length of full seven years, from time  
to time,

He at the building of this Sheepfold  
wrought,

And left the work unfinished when he  
died.

Three years, or little more, did Isabel

Survive her Husband: at her death the  
estate

Was sold, and went into a stranger's  
hand.

The Cottage which was named the EVE-  
NING STAR

Is gone — the ploughshare has been  
through the ground

On which it stood; great changes have  
been wrought

In all the neighborhood: — yet the oak is  
left

That grew beside their door; and the  
remains

Of the unfinished Sheepfold may be seen  
Beside the boisterous brook of Green-  
head Ghyll.

1800. 1800.

## POEMS ON THE NAMING OF PLACES

### I

Written at Grasmere. This poem was suggested on the banks of the brook that runs through Easedale, which is, in some parts of its course, as wild and beautiful as brook can be. I have composed thousands of verses by the side of it. (*Wordsworth.*)

It was an April morning: fresh and clear  
The Rivulet, delighting in its strength,  
Ran with a young man's speed; and yet  
the voice

Of waters which the winter had supplied  
Was softened down into a vernal tone.

The spirit of enjoyment and desire,  
And hopes and wishes, from all living  
things

Went circling, like a multitude of sounds.  
The budding groves seemed eager to urge

on

The steps of June; as if their various hues  
Were only hindrances that stood between  
Them and their object: but, meanwhile,  
prevailed

Such an entire contentment in the air  
That every naked ash, and tardy tree  
Yet leafless, showed as if the countenance  
With which it looked on this delightful  
day

Were native to the summer. — Up the  
brook

I roamed in the confusion of my heart,  
Alive to all things and forgetting all.  
At length I to a sudden turning came  
In this continuous glen, where down a  
rock

The Stream, so ardent in its course before,  
Sent forth such sallies of glad sound, that  
all

Which I till then had heard, appeared the  
voice

Of common pleasure: beast and bird, the  
lamb,

The shepherd's dog, the linnet and the  
thrush

Vied with this waterfall, and made a song,  
Which, while I listened, seemed like the  
wild growth

Or like some natural produce of the air,  
That could not cease to be. Green leaves  
were here;

But 'twas the foliage of the rocks — the  
birch,

The yew, the holly, and the bright green  
thorn,

With hanging islands of resplendent furze:  
And, on a summit, distant a short space,  
By any who should look beyond the dell,  
A single mountain-cottage might be seen.  
I gazed and gazed, and to myself I said,  
"Our thoughts at least are ours; and  
this wild nook,

My EMMA, I will dedicate to thee."

— Soon did the spot become my other  
home,

My dwelling, and my out-of-doors abode.  
And, of the Shepherds who have seen me  
there,

To whom I sometimes in our idle talk  
Have told this fancy, two or three, per-  
haps,

Years after we are gone and in our graves,  
When they have cause to speak of this  
wild place,

May call it by the name of EMMA'S DELL.  
1800. 1800.

"TIS SAID, THAT SOME HAVE  
DIED FOR LOVE"

'Tis said, that some have died for love:  
And here and there a churchyard grave is  
found

In the cold north's unhallowed ground,  
Because the wretched man himself had  
slain,

His love was such a grievous pain.

And there is one whom I five years have  
known;

He dwells alone

Upon Helvellyn's side:

He loved — the pretty Barbara died;

And thus he makes his moan:

Three years had Barbara in her grave  
been laid

When thus his moan he made:

"Oh, move, thou Cottage, from behind  
that oak!

Or let the aged tree uprooted lie,  
That in some other way yon smoke  
May mount into the sky!

The clouds pass on; they from the  
heavens depart.

I look — the sky is empty space;

I know not what I trace;

But when I cease to look, my hand is on  
my heart.

"Oh! what a weight is in these shades!  
Ye leaves,

That murmur once so dear, when will it  
cease?

Your sound my heart of rest bereaves,  
It robs my heart of peace.

Thou Thrush, that singest loud — and  
loud and free,

Into yon row of willows flit,

Upon that alder sit;

Or sing another song, or choose another  
tree.

"Roll back, sweet Rill! back to thy  
mountain-bounds,

And there for ever be thy waters chained!

For thou dost haunt the air with sounds  
That cannot be sustained;

If still beneath that pine-tree's ragged  
bough

Headlong yon waterfall must come,

Oh let it then be dumb!

Be anything, sweet Rill, but that which  
thou art now.

"Thou Eglantine, so bright with sunny  
showers,  
Proud as a rainbow spanning half the  
vale,  
Thou one fair shrub, oh! shed thy flowers,  
And stir not in the gale.  
For thus to see thee nodding in the air,  
To see thy arch thus stretch and bend,  
Thus rise and thus descend, —  
Disturbs me till the sight is more than I  
can bear."

The Man who makes this feverish complaint  
Is one of giant stature, who could dance  
Equipped from head to foot in iron mail.  
Ah gentle Love! if ever thought was  
thine  
To store up kindred hours for me, thy  
face  
Turn from me, gentle Love! nor let me  
walk  
Within the sound of Emma's voice, nor  
know  
Such happiness as I have known to-day.  
1800. 1800.

### THE SPARROWS' NEST

Written in the Orchard, Town-end, Grasmere.  
At the end of the garden of my father's house at  
Cockermouth was a high terrace that commanded a  
fine view of the river Derwent and Cockermouth  
Castle. This was our favorite play-ground. The  
terrace-wall, a low one, was covered with closely-  
clipt privet and roses, which gave an almost imper-  
vious shelter to birds that built their nests there.  
The latter of these stanzas alludes to one of those  
nests. (*Wordsworth.*)

BEHOLD, within the leafy shade,  
Those bright blue eggs together laid!  
On me the chance-discovered sight  
Gleamed like a vision of delight.  
I started — seeming to espy  
The home and sheltered bed,  
The Sparrow's dwelling, which, hard by  
My Father's house, in wet or dry  
My sister Emmeline<sup>1</sup> and I  
Together visited.  
She looked at it and seemed to fear it;  
Dreading, tho' wishing, to be near it:  
Such heart was in her, being then  
A little Prattler among men.

<sup>1</sup> Dorothy Wordsworth, called Emmeline also in  
the poem "To a Butterfly." See the beautiful lines  
"To My Sister," p. 12, and the notes on the Son-  
nets of 1802.

The Blessing of my later years  
Was with me when a boy:  
She gave me eyes, she gave me ears;  
And humble cares, and delicate fears;  
A heart, the fountain of sweet tears;  
And love, and thought, and joy.  
1801. 1807.

### TO A BUTTERFLY

STAY near me — do not take thy flight!  
A little longer stay in sight!  
Much converse do I find in thee,  
Historian of my infancy!  
Float near me; do not yet depart!  
Dead times revive in thee:  
Thou bring'st, gay creature as thou art!  
A solemn image to my heart,  
My father's family!

Oh! pleasant, pleasant were the days,  
The time, when, in our childish plays,  
My sister Emmeline and I  
Together chased the butterfly!  
A very hunter did I rush  
Upon the prey: — with leaps and springs  
I followed on from break to bush;  
But she, God love her, feared to brush  
The dust from off its wings.

1802. 1807.

### THE EMIGRANT MOTHER

ONCE in a lonely hamlet I sojourned  
In which a Lady driven from France did  
dwell;  
The big and lesser griefs with which she  
mourned,  
In friendship she to me would often tell.  
This Lady, dwelling upon British ground,  
Where she was childless, daily would  
repair  
To a poor neighbouring cottage; as I  
found,  
For sake of a young Child whose home  
was there.

Once having seen her clasp with fond em-  
brace  
This Child, I chanted to myself a lay,  
Endeavouring, in our English tongue, to  
trace  
Such things as she unto the Babe might  
say:



And thus, from what I heard and knew, or  
guessed,  
My song the workings of her heart ex-  
pressed.

## I

"Dear Babe, thou daughter of another,  
One moment let me be thy mother!  
An infant's face and looks are thine,  
And sure a mother's heart is mine:  
Thy own dear mother's far away,  
At labour in the harvest field:  
Thy little sister is at play; —  
What warmth, what comfort would it  
yield

To my poor heart, if thou wouldst be  
One little hour a child to me!

## II

"Across the waters I am come,  
And I have left a babe at home:  
A long, long way of land and sea!  
Come to me — I'm no enemy:  
I am the same who at thy side  
Sate yesterday, and made a nest  
For thee, sweet Baby! — thou hast tried,  
Thou know'st the pillow of my breast;  
Good, good art thou: — alas! to me  
Far more than I can be to thee.

## III

"Here, little Darling, dost thou lie;  
An infant thou, a mother I!  
Mine wilt thou be, thou hast no fears;  
Mine art thou — spite of these my tears.  
Alas! before I left the spot,  
My baby and its dwelling-place;  
The nurse said to me, 'Tears should not  
Be shed upon an infant's face,  
It was unlucky' — no, no, no;  
No truth is in them who say so!

## IV

"My own dear Little-one will sigh,  
Sweet Babe! and they will let him die.  
'He pines,' they'll say, 'it is his doom,  
And you may see his hour is come.'  
Oh! had he but thy cheerful smiles,  
Limbs stout as thine, and lips as gay,  
Thy looks, thy cunning, and thy wiles,  
And countenance like a summer's day,  
They would have hopes of him; — and  
then  
I should behold his face again!

## V

"'Tis gone — like dreams that we forget;  
There was a smile or two — yet — yet  
I can remember them, I see  
The smiles, worth all the world to me.  
Dear Baby! I must lay thee down;  
Thou troublest me with strange alarms;  
Smiles hast thou, bright ones of thy own;  
I cannot keep thee in my arms;  
For they confound me; — where — where  
is  
That last, that sweetest smile of his?

## VI

"Oh! how I love thee! — we will stay  
Together here this one half day.  
My sister's child, who bears my name,  
From France to sheltering England  
came;  
She with her mother crossed the sea;  
The babe and mother near me dwell:  
Yet does my yearning heart to thee  
Turn rather, though I love her well:  
Rest, little Stranger, rest thee here!  
Never was any child more dear!

## VII

"— I cannot help it; ill intent  
I've none, my pretty Innocent!  
I weep — I know they do thee wrong,  
These tears — and my poor idle tongue.  
Oh, what a kiss was that! my cheek  
How cold it is! but thou art good;  
Thine eyes are on me — they would  
speak,  
I think, to help me if they could.  
Blessings upon that soft, warm face,  
My heart again is in its place!

## VIII

"While thou art mine, my little Love,  
This cannot be a sorrowful grove;  
Contentment, hope, and mother's glee,  
I seem to find them all in thee:  
Here's grass to play with, here are flowers;  
I'll call thee by my darling's name;  
Thou hast, I think, a look of ours,  
Thy features seem to me the same;  
His little sister thou shalt be;  
And, when once more my home I see,  
I'll tell him many tales of Thee."

1802. 1807.

# MY HEART LEAPS UP WHEN I BEHOLD

My heart leaps up when I behold

A rainbow in the sky :

So was it when my life began ;

So is it now I am a man ;

So be it when I shall grow old,

Or let me die !

The Child is father of the Man ;

And I could wish my days to be

Bound each to each by natural piety.

1802. 1807.

## WRITTEN IN MARCH

WHILE RESTING ON THE BRIDGE AT THE  
FOOT OF BROTHER'S WATER

Extempore. This little poem was a favorite with Joanna Baillie. (*Wordsworth*.)

Compare the description of the same scene by Wordsworth's sister: "There was the gentle flowing of the stream, the glittering, lively lake, green fields without a living creature to be seen on them; behind us, a flat pasture with forty-two cattle feeding; to our left, the road leading to the hamlet. No smoke there, the sun shone on the bare roofs. The people were at work ploughing, harrowing, and sowing; . . . a dog barking now and then, cocks crowing, birds twittering, the snow in patches at the top of the highest hills, yellow palms, purple and green twigs on the birches, ashes with their glittering spikes, stems quite bare. The hawthorn a bright green, with black stems under the oak. The moss of the oak glossy. We went on . . . William finished his poem before we got to the foot of Kirkstone." (*Dorothy Wordsworth's Journal*, April 16, 1802.)

THE Cock is crowing,  
The stream is flowing,  
The small birds twitter,  
The lake doth glitter,  
The green field sleeps in the sun;  
The oldest and youngest  
Are at work with the strongest;  
The cattle are grazing,  
Their heads never raising;  
There are forty feeding like one!

Like an army defeated  
The snow hath retreated,  
And now doth fare ill  
On the top of the bare hill;  
The ploughboy is whooping — anon —  
anon:

There's joy in the mountains;  
There's life in the fountains;  
Small clouds are sailing,  
Blue sky prevailing;  
The rain is over and gone!

1802. 1807.

# TO THE SMALL CELANDINE

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. It is remarkable that this flower, coming out so early in the spring as it does, and so bright and beautiful, and in such profusion, should not have been noticed earlier in English verse. What adds much to the interest that attends it is its habit of shutting itself up and opening out according to the degree of light and temperature of the air. (*Wordsworth*.)

PANSIES, lilies, kingcups, daisies,  
Let them live upon their praises;  
Long as there's a sun that sets,  
Primroses will have their glory;  
Long as there are violets,  
They will have a place in story:  
There's a flower that shall be mine,  
'Tis the little celandine.

Eyes of some men travel far  
For the finding of a star;  
Up and down the heavens they go,  
Men that keep a mighty rout!  
I'm as great as they, I trow,  
Since the day I found thee out,  
Little Flower! — I'll make a stir,  
Like a sage astronomer.

Modest, yet withal an Elf  
Bold, and lavish of thyself;  
Since we needs must first have met  
I have seen thee, high and low,  
Thirty years or more, and yet  
'Twas a face I did not know;  
Thou hast now, go where I may,  
Fifty greetings in a day.

Ere a leaf is on a bush,  
In the time before the thrush  
Has a thought about her nest,  
Thou wilt come with half a call,  
Spreading out thy glossy breast  
Like a careless Prodigal;  
Telling tales about the sun,  
When we've little warmth, or none.

Poets, vain men in their mood!  
Travel with the multitude:  
Never heed them; I aver  
That they all are wanton wooers;  
But the thrifty cottager,  
Who stirs little out of doors,  
Joys to spy thee near her home;  
Spring is coming, Thou art come!

Comfort have thou of thy merit,  
Kindly, unassuming Spirit!

Careless of thy neighborhood,  
Thou dost show thy pleasant face  
On the moor, and in the wood,  
In the lane; there's not a place,  
Howsoever mean it be,  
But 'tis good enough for thee.

Ill befall the yellow flowers,  
Children of the flaring hours!  
Buttercups, that will be seen,  
Whether we will see or no;  
Others, too, of lofty mien;  
They have done as worldlings do,  
Taken praise that should be thine,  
Little, humble Celandine!

Prophet of delight and mirth,  
Ill-requited upon earth;  
Herald of a mighty band,  
Of a joyous train ensuing,  
Serving at my heart's command,  
Tasks that are no tasks renewing,  
I will sing, as doth behove,  
Hymns in praise of what I love!  
1802. 1807.

#### TO THE SAME FLOWER

PLEASURES newly found are sweet  
When they lie about our feet:  
February last, my heart  
First at sight of thee was glad;  
All unheard of as thou art,  
Thou must needs, I think, have had,  
Celandine! and long ago,  
Praise of which I nothing know.

I have not a doubt but he,  
Whosoe'er the man might be,  
Who the first with pointed rays  
(Workman worthy to be sainted)  
Set the sign-board in a blaze,  
When the rising sun he painted,  
Took the fancy from a glance  
At thy glittering countenance.

Soon as gentle breezes bring  
News of winter's vanishing,  
And the children build their bowers,  
Sticking 'kerchief-plots of mould  
All about with full-blown flowers,  
Thick as sheep in shepherd's fold!  
With the proudest thou art there,  
Mantling in the tiny square.

Often have I sighed to measure  
By myself a lonely pleasure,

Sighed to think I read a book  
Only read, perhaps, by me;  
Yet I long could overlook  
Thy bright coronet and Thee,  
And thy arch and wily ways,  
And thy store of other praise.

Blithe of heart, from week to week  
Thou dost play at hide-and-seek;  
While the patient primrose sits  
Like a beggar in the cold,  
Thou, a flower of wiser wits,  
Slipp'st into thy sheltering hold;  
Liveliest of the vernal train  
When ye all are out again.

Drawn by what peculiar spell,  
By what charm of sight or smell,  
Does the dim-eyed curious Bee,  
Laboring for her waxen cells,  
Fondly settle upon Thee  
Prized above all buds and bells  
Opening daily at thy side,  
By the season multiplied?

Thou are not beyond the moon,  
But a thing "beneath our shoon:"  
Let the bold Discoverer thrid  
In his bark the polar sea;  
Rear who will a pyramid;  
Praise it is enough for me,  
If there be but three or four  
Who will love my little Flower.  
1802. 1807.

#### RESOLUTION AND INDEPENDENCE

This poem was originally known as "The Leech Gatherer," and is still often called by that title. Compare the account of its origin, in Dorothy Wordsworth's *Journal*:

"When William and I returned, we met an old man almost double. He had on a coat, thrown over his shoulders, above his waistcoat and coat. Under this he carried a bundle, and had an apron on and a night-cap. His face was interesting. He had dark eyes and a long nose. John, who afterwards met him at Wytheburn, took him for a Jew. He was of Scotch parents, but had been born in the army. He had had a wife, and 'she was a good woman, and it pleased God to bless us with ten children.' All these were dead but one, of whom he had not heard for many years, a sailor. His trade was to gather leeches, but now leeches were scarce, and he had not strength for it. He lived by begging, and was making his way to Carlisle, where he should buy a few godly books to sell. He said leeches were very scarce, partly owing to this dry season, but many years they have been scarce. He supposed it owing to their being much sought after, that they did not breed fast, and were of slow growth. Leeches were

formerly 2s. 6d. per 100; they are now 30s. He had been hurt in driving a cart, his leg broken, his body driven over, his skull fractured. He felt no pain till he recovered from his first insensibility. . . It was then late in the evening, when the light was just going away." (Dorothy Wordsworth's *Journal*, October 3, 1800.)

THERE was a roaring in the wind all night;  
The rain came heavily and fell in floods;  
But now the sun is rising calm and bright;  
The birds are singing in the distant woods;  
Over his own sweet voice the Stock-dove  
broods;  
The Jay makes answer as the Magpie  
chatters;  
And all the air is filled with pleasant  
noise of waters.

All things that love the sun are out of  
doors;  
The sky rejoices in the morning's birth;  
The grass is bright with rain-drops; — on  
the moors  
The hare is running races in her mirth;  
And with her feet she from the plashy  
earth  
Raises a mist, that, glittering in the sun,  
Runs with her all the way, wherever she  
doth run.

I was a Traveller then upon the moor,  
I saw the hare that raced about with joy;  
I heard the woods and distant waters roar;  
Or heard them not, as happy as a boy:  
The pleasant season did my heart employ:  
My old remembrances went from me  
wholly;  
And all the ways of men, so vain and  
melancholy.

But, as it sometimes chanceth, from the  
might  
Of joy in minds that can no further go,  
As high as we have mounted in delight  
In our dejection do we sink as low;  
To me that morning did it happen so;  
And fears and fancies thick upon me  
came;  
Dim sadness — and blind thoughts, I  
knew not, nor could name.

I heard the skylark warbling in the sky;  
And I bethought me of the playful hare:  
Even such a happy Child of earth am I;  
Even as these blissful creatures do I fare;  
Far from the world I walk, and from all  
care;

But there may come another day to me —  
Solitude, pain of heart, distress, and  
poverty.

My whole life I have lived in pleasant  
thought,  
As if life's business were a summer mood;  
As if all needful things would come un-  
sought  
To genial faith, still rich in genial good;  
But how can he expect that others should  
Build for him, sow for him, and at his  
call  
Love him, who for himself will take no  
heed at all?

I thought of Chatterton, the marvellous  
Boy,  
The sleepless Soul that perished in his  
pride;  
Of him who walked in glory and in joy  
Following his plough, along the moun-  
tain-side:  
By our own spirits are we deified:  
We Poets in our youth begin in gladness;  
But thereof come in the end despondency  
and madness.

Now, whether it were by peculiar grace,  
A leading from above, a something given,  
Yet it befell, that, in this lonely place,  
When I with these untoward thoughts  
had striven,  
Beside a pool bare to the eye of heaven  
I saw a Man before me unawares:  
The oldest man he seemed that ever wore  
gray hairs.

As a huge stone is sometimes seen to lie  
Couched on the bald top of an eminence;  
Wonder to all who do the same espy,  
By what means it could thither come,  
and whence;  
So that it seems a thing endowed with  
sense:  
Like a sea-beast crawled forth, that on a  
shelf  
Of rock or sand reposes, there to sun  
itself;

Such seemed this Man, not all alive nor  
dead,  
Nor all asleep, in his extreme old age:  
His body was bent double, feet and head  
Coming together in life's pilgrimage;  
As if some dire constraint of pain, or rage

Of sickness felt by him in times long past,  
A more than human weight upon his  
frame had cast.

Himself he propped, limbs, body, and  
pale face,

Upon a long gray staff of shaven wood :  
And, still as I drew near with gentle pace,  
Upon the margin of that moorish flood,  
Motionless as a cloud the old Man stood,  
That heareth not the loud winds when  
they call

And moveth all together, if it move at all.

At length, himself unsettling, he the pond  
Stirred with his staff, and fixedly did look  
Upon the muddy water, which he conned,  
As if he had been reading in a book :  
And now a stranger's privilege I took ;  
And, drawing to his side, to him did say,  
"This morning gives us promise of a  
glorious day."

A gentle answer did the old Man make,  
In courteous speech which forth he  
slowly drew :

And him with further words I thus be-  
spoke,

"What occupation do you there pursue?  
This is a lonesome place for one like you."  
Ere he replied, a flash of mild surprise  
Broke from the sable orbs of his yet-vivid  
eyes,

His words came feebly, from a feeble  
chest,

But each in solemn order followed each,  
With something of a lofty utterance  
drest —

Choice word and measured phrase,  
above the reach

Of ordinary men ; a stately speech ;  
Such as grave Livers do in Scotland use,  
Religious men, who give to God and  
man their dues.

He told, that to these waters he had come  
To gather leeches, being old and poor :  
Employment hazardous and wearisome !  
And he had many hardships to endure :  
From pond to pond he roamed, from  
moor to moor ;

Housing, with God's good help, by choice  
or chance,

And in this way he gained an honest  
maintenance.

The old Man still stood talking by my  
side ;

But now his voice to me was like a stream  
Scarce heard ; nor word from word could  
I divide ;

And the whole body of the Man did seem  
Like one whom I had met with in a  
dream ;

Or like a man from some far region sent,  
To give me human strength, by apt ad-  
monishment.

My former thoughts returned : the fear  
that kills ;

And hope that is unwilling to be fed ;  
Cold, pain, and labor, and all fleshly ills ;  
And mighty Poets in their misery dead.

— Perplexed, and longing to be com-  
forted,

My question eagerly did I renew,  
"How is it that you live, and what is it  
you do?"

He with a smile did then his words repeat ;  
And said, that, gathering leeches, far and  
wide

He travelled ; stirring thus about his feet  
The waters of the pools where they abide.

"Once I could meet with them on every  
side ;

But they have dwindled long by slow  
decay ;

Yet still I persevere, and find them  
where I may."

While he was talking thus, the lonely  
place,

The old Man's shape, and speech — all  
troubled me :

In my mind's eye I seemed to see him  
pace

About the weary moors continually,  
Wandering about alone and silently.

While I these thoughts within myself  
pursued,

He, having made a pause, the same dis-  
course renewed.

And soon with this he other matter  
blended,

Cheerfully uttered, with demeanor kind,  
But stately in the main ; and when he  
ended,

I could have laughed myself to scorn, to  
find,

In that decrepit Man so firm a mind.



"God," said I, "be my help and stay  
secure;  
I'll think of the Leech-gatherer on the  
lonely moor!"

1802. 1807.

### I GRIEVED FOR BUONAPARTÉ

The direct influence of Milton seems evident in many of the following sonnets, and is confirmed by the entry in Dorothy Wordsworth's *Journal*, May 21, 1802: "William wrote two sonnets of Buonaparte, after I had read Milton's sonnets to him." See also Wordsworth's note on "Nun's Fret Not at Their Convent's Narrow Room," p. 57.

I GRIEVED for Buonaparté, with a vain  
And an unthinking grief! The tenderest  
mood

Of that Man's mind — what can it be?  
what food

Fed his first hopes? what knowledge  
could he gain?

'Tis not in battles that from youth we  
train

The Governor who must be wise and good,  
And temper with the sternness of the  
brain

Thoughts motherly, and meek as woman-  
hood.

Wisdom doth live with children round  
her knees:

Books, leisure, perfect freedom, and the  
talk

Man holds with week-day man in the  
hourly walk

Of the mind's business: these are the  
degrees

By which true Sway doth mount; this  
is the stalk

True Power doth grow on; and her rights  
are these. 1802. 1802.

### COMPOSED UPON WESTMINSTER BRIDGE, SEPTEMBER 3, 1802

"We left London on Saturday morning at half-past five or six, the 30th of July. We mounted the Dover coach at Charing Cross. It was a beautiful morning. The city, St. Paul's, with the river, and a multitude of little boats, made a most beautiful sight as we crossed Westminster Bridge. The houses were not overhung by their cloud of smoke, and they were spread out endlessly; yet the sun shone so brightly, with such a fierce light, that there was even something like the purity of one of nature's own grand spectacles." (Dorothy Wordsworth's *Journal*, July, 1802.)

EARTH has not anything to show more  
fair:

Dull would he be of soul who could pass  
by

A sight so touching in its majesty:  
This City now doth, like a garment,  
wear

The beauty of the morning; silent, bare,  
Ships, towers, domes, theatres and tem-  
ples lie

Open unto the fields, and to the sky;  
All bright and glittering in the smoke-  
less air.

Never did sun more beautifully steep  
In his first splendor, valley, rock, or hill;  
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!  
The river glideth at his own sweet will:  
Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;  
And all that mighty heart is lying  
still!

1802. 1807.

### COMPOSED BY THE SEA-SIDE, NEAR CALAIS, AUGUST 1802

"We had delightful walks after the heat of the day was passed — seeing far off in the west the coast of England like a cloud crested with Dover Castle, which was but like the summit of the cloud — the evening star and the glory of the sky, the reflections in the water were more beautiful than the sky itself, purple waves brighter than precious stones, for ever melting away upon the sands . . . Nothing in romance was ever half so beautiful. Now came in view, as the evening star sunk down, and the colors of the west faded away, the two lights of England." (Dorothy Wordsworth's *Journal*, August, 1802.)

FAIR Star of evening, Splendor of the  
west,

Star of my Country! — on the horizon's  
brink

Thou hangest, stooping, as might seem,  
to sink

On England's bosom; yet well pleased  
to rest,

Meanwhile, and be to her a glorious crest  
Conspicuous to the Nations. Thou, I  
think,

Should'st be my Country's emblem; and  
should'st wink,

Bright Star! with laughter on her ban-  
ners, drest

In thy fresh beauty. There! that dusky  
spot

Beneath thee, that is England; there she  
lies.

Blessings be on you both! one hope, one  
lot,

One life, one glory! — I, with many a fear

For my dear Country, many heartfelt  
sighs,  
Among men who do not love her, linger  
here. 1802. 1807.

### IT IS A BEAUTEOUS EVENING, CALM AND FREE

This was composed on the beach near Calais, in the autumn of 1802. (*Wordsworth.*)

The last six lines are addressed to the poet's natural daughter, Caroline. See Legouis's *William Wordsworth and Annette Vallon*, p. 68.

It is a beauteous evening, calm and free,  
The holy time is quiet as a Nun  
Breathless with adoration; the broad sun  
Is sinking down in its tranquillity;  
The gentleness of heaven broods o'er the  
Sea:

Listen! the mighty Being is awake,  
And doth with his eternal motion make  
A sound like thunder—everlastingly.  
Dear Child! dear Girl! that walkest  
with me here,

If thou appear untouched by solemn  
thought,

Thy nature is not therefore less divine:  
Thou liest in Abraham's bosom all the  
year;

And worship'st at the Temple's inner  
shrine,

God being with thee when we know it  
not. 1802. 1807.

### ON THE EXTINCTION OF THE VENETIAN REPUBLIC

ONCE did She hold the gorgeous east in fee;  
And was the safeguard of the west: the  
worth

Of Venice did not fall below her birth,  
Venice, the eldest Child of Liberty.

She was a maiden City, bright and free;  
No guile seduced, no force could violate;  
And when she took unto herself a Mate,  
She must espouse the everlasting Sea.

And what if she had seen those glories  
fade,

Those titles vanish, and that strength  
decay;

Yet shall some tribute of regret be paid  
When her long life hath reached its final  
day:

Men are we, and must grieve when even  
the Shade

Of that which once was great, is passed  
away. 1802. 1807.

### TO TOUSSAINT L'OUVERTURE

TOUSSAINT, the most unhappy man of  
men!

Whether the whistling Rustic tend his  
plough

Within thy hearing, or thy head be now  
Pillowed in some deep dungeon's earless  
den;—

O miserable Chieftain! where and when  
Wilt thou find patience? Yet die not;  
do thou

Wear rather in thy bonds a cheerful brow:  
Though fallen thyself, never to rise  
again,

Live, and take comfort. Thou hast  
left behind

Powers that will work for thee; air,  
earth, and skies;

There's not a breathing of the common  
wind

That will forget thee; thou hast great  
allies;

Thy friends are exultations, agonies,  
And love, and man's unconquerable  
mind. 1802. 1803.

### COMPOSED IN THE VALLEY NEAR DOVER, ON THE DAY OF LANDING

HERE, on our native soil, we breathe once  
more.

The cock that crows, the smoke that curls,  
that sound

Of bells; those boys who in yon meadow-  
ground

In white-sleeved shirts are playing; and  
the roar

Of the waves breaking on the chalky  
shore;—

All, all are English. Oft have I looked  
round

With joy in Kent's green vales; but never  
found

Myself so satisfied in heart before.

Europe is yet in bonds; but let that pass,  
Thought for another moment. Thou art  
free,

My Country! and 'tis joy enough and  
pride

For one hour's perfect bliss, to tread the  
grass

Of England once again, and hear and see,  
With such a dear Companion at my side.

1802. 1807.

SEPTEMBER I, 1802

★ WRITTEN IN LONDON, SEPTEMBER  
1802

Among the capricious acts of tyranny that disgraced those times, was the chasing of all Negroes from France by decree of the government: we had a Fellow-passenger who was one of the expelled. (Wordsworth.)

We had a female Passenger who came  
From Calais with us, spotless in array, —  
A white-robed Negro, like a lady gay,  
Yet downcast as a woman fearing blame;  
Meek, destitute, as seemed, of hope or aim

She sate, from no ice turning not away,  
But on all proffered intercourse did lay  
A weight of languid speech, or to the same

No sign of answer made by word or face:

Yet still her eyes retained their tropic fire,

That, burning independent of the mind,  
Joined with the lustre of her rich attire  
To mock the Outcast. — O ye Heavens,  
be kind!

And feel, thou Earth, for this afflicted  
Race!

1802. 1807.

NEAR DOVER, SEPTEMBER 1802

INLAND, within a hollow vale, I stood;  
And saw, while sea was calm and air  
was clear,

The coast of France — the coast of France  
how near!

Drawn almost into frightful neighbor-  
hood.

I shrunk; for verily the barrier flood  
Was like a lake, or river bright and  
fair,

A span of waters; yet what power is  
there!

What mightiness for evil and for good!  
Even so doth God protect us if we be  
Virtuous and wise. Winds blow, and  
waters roll,

Strength to the brave, and Power, and  
Deity;

Yet in themselves are nothing! One  
decree

Spake laws to *them*, and said that by the  
soul

Only, the Nations shall be great and free.  
1802. 1807.

This was written immediately after my return from France to London, when I could not but be struck, as here described, with the vanity and parade of our own country, especially in great towns and cities, as contrasted with the quiet, and I may say the desolation, that the revolution had produced in France. This must be borne in mind, or else the reader may think that in this and the succeeding Sonnets I have exaggerated the mischief engendered and fostered among us by undisturbed wealth. It would not be easy to conceive with what a depth of feeling I entered into the struggle carried on by the Spaniards for their deliverance from the usurped power of the French. Many times have I gone from Allan Bank in Grasmere vale, where we were then residing, to the top of the Raise-gap as it is called, so late as two o'clock in the morning to meet the carrier bringing the newspaper from Keswick. Imperfect traces of the state of mind in which I then was may be found in my Tract on the Convention of Cintra, as well as in these Sonnets. (Wordsworth.)

O FRIEND! I know not which way I  
must look

For comfort, being, as I am, opprest,  
To think that now our life is only drest  
For show; mean handy-work of crafts-  
man, cook,

Or groom! — We must run glittering like  
a brook

In the open sunshine, or we are unblest:  
The wealthiest man among us is the best:  
No grandeur now in nature or in book  
Delights us. Rapine, avarice, expense,  
This is idolatry; and these we adore:  
Plain living and high thinking are no  
more:

The homely beauty of the good old cause  
Is gone; our peace, our fearful innocence,  
And pure religion breathing household  
laws.

1802. 1807.

★ LONDON, 1802

MILTON! thou shouldst be living at this  
hour:

England hath need of thee; she is a fen  
Of stagnant waters: altar, sword, and pen,  
Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and  
bower,

Have forfeited their ancient English  
dower

Of inward happiness. We are selfish  
men;

Oh! raise us up, return to us again;  
And give us manners, virtue, freedom,  
power.

Thy soul was like a Star, and dwelt  
apart:

Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like  
the sea:

Pure as the naked heavens, majestic,  
free,

So didst thou travel on life's common way,  
In cheerful godliness; and yet thy heart  
The lowliest duties on herself did lay.

1802. 1807.

### GREAT MEN HAVE BEEN AMONG US

GREAT men have been among us; hands  
that penned

And tongues that uttered wisdom — bet-  
ter none:

The later Sidney, Marvel, Harrington,  
Young Vane, and others who called  
Milton friend.

These moralists could act and compre-  
hend:

They knew how genuine glory was put on;  
Taught us how rightfully a nation shone  
In splendor: what strength was, that  
would not bend

But in magnanimous meekness. France,  
'tis strange,

Hath brought forth no such souls as we  
had then.

Perpetual emptiness! unceasing change!  
No single volume paramount, no code,  
No master spirit, no determined road;  
But equally a want of books and men!

1802. 1807.

### IT IS NOT TO BE THOUGHT OF

It is not to be thought of that the Flood  
Of British freedom, which, to the open sea  
Of the world's praise, from dark an-  
tiquity

Hath flowed, "with pomp of waters, un-  
withstood,"

Roused though it be full often to a mood  
Which spurns the check of salutary  
bands,

That this most famous stream in bogs  
and sands

Should perish; and to evil and to good  
Be lost for ever. In our halls is hung  
Armory of the invincible Knights of old:  
We must be free or die, who speak the  
tongue

That Shakspeare spake; the faith and  
morals hold

Which Milton held. — In everything we  
are sprung

Of Earth's first blood, have titles mani-  
fold.

1802 or 1803. April 16, 1803.

### WHEN I HAVE BORNE IN MEMORY

WHEN I have borne in memory what has  
tamed

Great Nations, how ennobling thoughts  
depart

When men change swords for ledgers,  
and desert

The student's bower for gold, some fears  
unnamed

I had, my Country! — am I to be  
blamed?

Now, when I think of thee, and what  
thou art,

Verily, in the bottom of my heart,  
Of those unfilial fears I am ashamed.  
For dearly must we prize thee; we who  
find

In thee a bulwark for the cause of men:  
And I by my affection was beguiled:  
What wonder if a Poet now and then,  
Among the many movements of his mind,  
Felt for thee as a lover or a child!

1802 or 1803. September 17, 1803.

### TO HARTLEY COLERIDGE

SIX YEARS OLD

O THOU! whose fancies from afar are  
brought;

Who of thy words dost make a mock  
apparel,

And fittest to unutterable thought  
The breeze-like motion and the self-  
born carol;

Thou faery voyager! that dost float  
In such clear water, that thy boat  
May rather seem

To brood on air than on an earthly  
stream;

Suspended in a stream as clear as sky,  
Where earth and heaven do make one  
imagery;

O blessed vision! happy child!  
Thou art so exquisitely wild,



I think of thee with many fears  
 For what may be thy lot in future years.  
 I thought of times when Pain might  
   be thy guest,

Lord of thy house and hospitality;  
 And Grief, uneasy lover! never rest  
 But when she sate within the touch of thee.  
 O too industrious folly!  
 O vain and causeless melancholy!  
 Nature will either end thee quite;  
 Or, lengthening out thy season of delight,  
 Preserve for thee, by individual right,  
 A young lamb's heart among the full-  
   grown flocks.

What hast thou to do with sorrow,  
 Or the injuries of to-morrow?  
 Thou art a dew-drop, which the morn  
   brings forth,

Ill fitted to sustain unkindly shocks,  
 Or to be trailed along the soiling earth;  
 A gem that glitters while it lives,  
 And no forewarning gives;  
 But, at the touch of wrong, without a  
   strife

Slips in a moment out of life.

1802. 1807.

### TO THE DAISY

IN youth from rock to rock I went,  
 From hill to hill in discontent  
 Of pleasure high and turbulent,  
   Most pleased when most uneasy;  
 But now my own delights I make, —  
 My thirst at every rill can slake,  
 And gladly Nature's love partake,  
   Of Thee, sweet Daisy!

Thee Winter in the garland wears  
 That thinly decks his few gray hairs;  
 Spring parts the clouds with softest airs,  
   That she may sun thee;  
 Whole Summer-fields are thine by right;  
 And Autumn, melancholy Wight!  
 Doth in thy crimson head delight  
   When rains are on thee.

In shoals and bands, a morrice train,  
 Thou greet'st the traveller in the lane;  
 Pleased at his greeting thee again;  
   Yet nothing daunted,  
 Nor grieved if thou be set at nought:  
 And oft alone in nooks remote  
 We meet thee, like a pleasant thought,  
   When such are wanted.

Be violets in their secret mews  
 The flowers the wanton Zephyrs choose;  
 Proud be the rose, with rains and dews

Her head impearling;  
 Thou liv'st with less ambitious aim,  
 Yet hast not gone without thy fame;  
 Thou art indeed by many a claim  
   The Poet's darling.

If to a rock from rains he fly,  
 Or, some bright day of April sky,  
 Imprisoned by hot sunshine lie  
   Near the green holly,  
 And wearily at length should fare;  
 He needs but look about, and there  
 Thou art! — a friend at hand, to scare  
   His melancholy.

A hundred times, by rock or bower,  
 Ere thus I have lain couched an hour,  
 Have I derived from thy sweet power  
   Some apprehension;  
 Some steady love; some brief delight;  
 Some memory that had taken flight;  
 Some chime of fancy wrong or right;  
   Or stray invention.

If stately passions in me burn,  
 And one chance look to Thee should turn,  
 I drink out of an humbler urn

A lowlier pleasure;  
 The homely sympathy that heeds  
 The common life our nature breeds;  
 A wisdom fitted to the needs  
   Of hearts at leisure.

Fresh-smitten by the morning ray,  
 When thou art up, alert and gay,  
 Then, cheerful Flower! my spirits play  
   With kindred gladness:  
 And when, at dusk, by dews opprest  
 Thou sink'st, the image of thy rest  
 Hath often eased my pensive breast  
   Of careful sadness.

And all day long I number yet,  
 All seasons through, another debt,  
 Which I, wherever thou art met,  
   To thee am owing;  
 An instinct call it, a blind sense;  
 A happy, genial influence,  
 Coming one knows not how, nor whence,  
   Nor whither going.

Child of the Year! that round dost run  
 Thy pleasant course, — when day's begun



As ready to salute the sun  
 As lark or leveret,  
 Thy long-lost praise thou shalt regain;  
 Nor be less dear to future men  
 Than in old time; thou not in vain  
 Art Nature's favorite.<sup>1</sup>

1802. 1807.

## TO THE SAME FLOWER

With little here to do or see  
 Of things that in the great world be,  
 Daisy! again I talk to thee,

For thou art worthy,  
 Thou unassuming Common-place  
 Of Nature, with that homely face,  
 And yet with something of a grace,  
 Which Love makes for thee!

Oft on the dappled turf at ease  
 I sit, and play with similes,  
 Loose types of things through all degrees,

Thoughts of thy raising:  
 And many a fond and idle name  
 I give to thee, for praise or blame,  
 As is the humor of the game,  
 While I am gazing.

A nun demure of lowly port;  
 Or sprightly maiden, of Love's court,  
 In thy simplicity the sport

Of all temptations;  
 A queen in crown of rubies drest;  
 A starveling in a scanty vest;  
 Are all, as seems to suit thee best,  
 Thy appellations.

A little cyclops, with one eye  
 Staring to threaten and defy,  
 That thought comes next — and instantly

The freak is over,  
 The shape will vanish — and behold  
 A silver shield with boss of gold,  
 That spreads itself, some faery bold  
 In fight to cover!

I see thee glittering from afar —  
 And then thou art a pretty star;  
 Not quite so fair as many are

In heaven above thee!  
 Yet like a star, with glittering crest,  
 Self-poised in air thou seem'st to rest; —  
 May peace come never to his nest,  
 Who shall reprove thee!

<sup>1</sup> See, in Chaucer and the elder Poets, the honors formerly paid to this flower. (Wordsworth.)

Bright Flower! for by that name at last,  
 When all my reveries are past,  
 I call thee, and to that cleave fast,

Sweet silent creature!  
 That breath'st with me in sun and air,  
 Do thou, as thou art wont, repair  
 My heart with gladness, and a share  
 Of thy meek nature!

1802. 1807.

## 2 ★ TO THE DAISY

BRIGHT Flower! whose home is every-  
 where,  
 Bold in maternal Nature's care,  
 And all the long year through, the heir  
 Of joy or sorrow;  
 Methinks that there abides in thee  
 Some concord with humanity,  
 Given to no other flower I see  
 The forest thorough!

Is it that Man is soon deprest?  
 A thoughtless Thing! who, once unblest,  
 Does little on his memory rest,  
 Or on his reason,  
 And Thou would'st teach him how to find  
 A shelter under every wind,  
 A hope for times that are unkind  
 And every season?

Thou wander'st the wide world about,  
 Unchecked by pride or scrupulous doubt,  
 With friends to greet thee, or without,  
 Yet pleased and willing;  
 Meek, yielding to the occasion's call,  
 And all things suffering from all,  
 Thy function apostolical  
 In peace fulfilling.

1802. 1807.

## THE GREEN LINNET

BENEATH these fruit-tree boughs that shed  
 Their snow-white blossoms on my head,  
 With brightest sunshine round me spread

Of spring's unclouded weather,  
 In this sequestered nook how sweet  
 To sit upon my orchard-seat!  
 And birds and flowers once more to greet,  
 My last year's friends together.

One have I marked, the happiest guest  
 In all this covert of the blest:  
 Hail to Thee, far above the rest

In joy of voice and pinion!  
Thou, Linnet! in thy green array,  
Presiding Spirit here to-day,  
Dost lead the revels of the May;  
And this is thy dominion.

While birds, and butterflies, and flowers,  
Make all one band of paramours,  
Thou, ranging up and down the bowers,  
Art sole in thy employment:  
A Life, a Presence like the Air,  
Scattering thy gladness without care,  
Too blest with any one to pair;  
Thyself thy own enjoyment.

Amid yon tuft of hazel trees,  
That twinkle to the gusty breeze,  
Behold him perched in ecstasies,  
Yet seeming still to hover;  
There! where the flutter of his wings  
Upon his back and body flings  
Shadows and sunny glimmerings,  
That cover him all over.

My dazzled sight he oft deceives,  
A Brother of the dancing leaves;  
Then flits, and from the cottage-eaves  
Pours forth his song in gushes;  
As if by that exulting strain  
He mocked and treated with disdain  
The voiceless Form he chose to feign,  
While fluttering in the bushes.

1803. 1807.

### YEW-TREES

Compare the note on "A Night Piece."

THERE is a Yew-tree, pride of Lorton Vale,  
Which to this day stands single, in the  
midst  
Of its own darkness, as it stood of yore;  
Not loth to furnish weapons for the bands  
Of Unfraville or Percy ere they marched  
To Scotland's heaths; or those that  
crossed the sea  
And drew their sounding bows at Azin-  
cour,  
Perhaps at earlier Crecy, or Poitiers.  
Of vast circumference and gloom pro-  
found  
This solitary Tree! a living thing  
Produced too slowly ever to decay;  
Of form and aspect too magnificent  
To be destroyed. But worthier still of  
note

Are those fraternal Four of Borrowdale  
Joined in one solemn and capacious  
grove;  
Huge trunks; and each particular trunk  
a growth  
Of intertwined fibres serpentine  
Up-coiling, and inveterately convolved;  
Nor uninformed with Phantasy, and looks  
That threaten the profane; — a pillared  
shade,  
Upon whose grassless floor of red-brown  
hue,  
By sheddings from the pining umbrage  
tinged  
Perennially — beneath whose sable roof  
Of boughs, as if for festal purpose, decked  
With unrejoicing berries — ghostly Shapes  
May meet at noontide; Fear and trem-  
bling Hope,  
Silence and Foresight; Death the Skele-  
ton  
And Time the Shadow; — there to cele-  
brate,  
As in a natural temple scattered o'er  
With altars undisturbed of mossy stone,  
United worship; or in mute repose  
To lie, and listen to the mountain flood  
Murmuring from Glaramara's inmost  
caves. 1803. 1815.

### AT THE GRAVE OF BURNS

1803

#### SEVEN YEARS AFTER HIS DEATH

For illustration, see my *Sister's Journal*.  
(*Wordsworth*.)

I SHIVER, Spirit fierce and bold,  
At thought of what I now behold:  
As vapors breathed from dungeons cold,  
Strike pleasure dead,  
So sadness comes from out the mould  
Where Burns is laid.

And have I then thy bones so near,  
And thou forbidden to appear?  
As if it were thyself that's here  
I shrink with pain;  
And both my wishes and my fear  
Alike are vain.

Off weight — nor press on weight! —  
away  
Dark thoughts! — they came, but not to  
stay;

With chastened feelings would I pay  
 The tribute due  
 To him, and aught that hides his clay  
 From mortal view.

Fresh as the flower, whose modest worth  
 He sang, his genius "glinted" forth,  
 Rose like a star that touching earth,  
 For so it seems,  
 Doth glorify its humble birth  
 With matchless beams.

The piercing eye, the thoughtful brow,  
 The struggling heart, where be they  
 now? —  
 Full soon the Aspirant of the plough,  
 The prompt, the brave,  
 Slept, with the obscurest, in the low  
 And silent grave.

I mourned with thousands, but as one  
 More deeply grieved, for He was gone  
 Whose light I hailed when first it shone,  
And showed my youth  
How Verse may build a princely throne  
On humble truth.

Alas! where'er the current tends,  
 Regret pursues and with it blends, —  
 Huge Criffel's hoary top ascends  
 By Skiddaw seen, —  
 Neighbors we were, and loving friends  
 We might have been;

True friends though diversely inclined;  
 But heart with heart and mind with mind,  
 Where the main fibres are entwined,  
 Through Nature's skill,  
 May even by contraries be joined  
 More closely still.

The tear will start, and let it flow;  
 Thou "poor Inhabitant below,"  
 At this dread moment — even so —  
 Might we together  
 Have sate and talked where gowans blow,  
 Or on wild heather.

What treasures would have then been  
 placed  
 Within my reach; of knowledge graced  
 By fancy what a rich repast!  
 But why go on? —  
 Oh! spare to sweep, thou mournful blast,  
 His grave grass-grown.

There, too, a Son, his joy and pride,  
 (Not three weeks past the Stripling died,)  
 Lies gathered to his Father's side,  
 Soul-moving sight!  
 Yet one to which is not denied  
 Some sad delight:

For *he* is safe, a quiet bed  
 Hath early found among the dead,  
 Harbored where none can be misled,  
 Wronged, or distrest;  
 And surely here it may be said  
 That such are blest.

And oh for Thee, by pitying grace  
 Checked oft-times in a devious race,  
 May He who halloweth the place  
 Where Man is laid  
 Receive thy Spirit in the embrace  
 For which it prayed!

Sighing I turned away; but ere  
 Night fell I heard, or seemed to hear,  
 Music that sorrow comes not near,  
 A ritual hymn,  
 Chanted in love that casts out fear  
 By Seraphim.

1803. 1845



## TO A HIGHLAND GIRL

AT INVERSNEYDE, UPON LOCH LOMOND

This delightful creature and her demeanor are particularly described in my *Sister's Journal*.  
 (Wordsworth.)

SWEET Highland Girl, a very shower  
 Of beauty is thy earthly dower!  
 Twice seven consenting years have shed  
 Their utmost bounty on thy head:  
 And these gray rocks; that household  
 lawn;  
 Those trees, a veil just half withdrawn;  
 This fall of water that doth make  
 A murmur near the silent lake;  
 This little bay; a quiet road  
 That holds in shelter thy Abode —  
 In truth together do ye seem  
 Like something fashioned in a dream;  
 Such Forms as from their covert peep  
 When earthly cares are laid asleep!  
 But, O fair Creature! in the light  
 Of common day, so heavenly bright,  
 I bless Thee, Vision as thou art  
 I bless thee with a human heart;  
 God shield thee to thy latest years!

Thee neither know I, nor thy peers ;  
And yet my eyes are filled with tears.

With earnest feeling I shall pray  
For thee when I am far away :  
For never saw I mien, or face,  
In which more plainly I could trace  
Benignity and home-bred sense  
Ripening in perfect innocence.  
Here scattered, like a random seed,  
Remote from men, Thou dost not need  
The embarrassed look of shy distress,  
And maidenly shamefacedness :  
Thou wear'st upon thy forehead clear  
The freedom of a Mountaineer :  
A face with gladness overspread !  
Soft smiles, by human kindness bred !  
And seemliness complete, that sways  
Thy courtesies, about thee plays ;  
With no restraint, but such as springs  
From quick and eager visitings  
Of thoughts that lie beyond the reach  
Of thy few words of English speech :  
A bondage sweetly brooked, a strife  
That gives thy gestures grace and life !  
So have I, not unmoved in mind,  
Seen birds of tempest-loving kind —  
Thus beating up against the wind.

What hand but would a garland cull  
For thee who art so beautiful ?  
O happy pleasure ! here to dwell  
Beside thee in some heathy dell ;  
Adopt your homely ways, and dress,  
A Shepherd, thou a Shepherdess !  
But I could frame a wish for thee  
More like a grave reality :  
Thou art to me but as a wave  
Of the wild sea ; and I would have  
Some claim upon thee, if I could,  
Though but of common neighborhood.  
What joy to hear thee, and to see !  
Thy elder Brother I would be,  
Thy Father — anything to thee !  
Now thanks to Heaven ! that of its grace  
Hath led me to this lonely place.  
Joy have I had ; and going hence  
I bear away my recompense.

In spots like these it is we prize  
Our Memory, feel that she hath eyes :  
Then, why should I be loth to stir ?  
I feel this place was made for her ;  
To give new pleasure like the past,  
Continued long as life shall last.  
Nor am I loth, though pleased at heart,  
Sweet Highland Girl ! from thee to part :  
For I, methinks, till I grow old,  
As fair before me shall behold,

As I do now, the cabin small,  
The lake, the bay, the waterfall ;  
And Thee, the spirit of them all !  
1803. 1807.



### STEPPING WESTWARD

While my Fellow-traveller and I were walking  
by the side of Loch Ketterine, one fine evening after  
sunset, in our road to a Hut where, in the course of  
our Tour, we had been hospitably entertained some  
weeks before, we met, in one of the loneliest parts  
of that solitary region, two well-dressed Women,  
one of whom said to us by way of greeting, "What,  
you are stepping westward?" (*Wordsworth.*)

"What, you are stepping westward?"  
— "Yea."

— " 'Twould be a *wildish* destiny,  
If we, who thus together roam  
In a strange Land, and far from home,  
Were in this place the guests of Chance :  
Yet who would stop, or fear to advance  
Though home or shelter he had none,  
With such a sky to lead him on ?

The dewy ground was dark and cold ;  
Behind, all gloomy to behold ;  
And stepping westward seemed to be  
A kind of *heavenly* destiny :  
I liked the greeting ; 'twas a sound  
Of something without place or bound ;  
And seemed to give me spiritual right  
To travel through that region bright.

The voice was soft, and she who spake  
Was walking by her native lake :  
The salutation had to me  
The very sound of courtesy :  
Its power was felt ; and while my eye  
Was fixed upon the glowing Sky,  
The echo of the voice enwrought  
A human sweetness with the thought  
Of travelling through the world that lay  
Before me in my endless way.  
1803. 1807.

### THE SOLITARY REAPER

BEHOLD her, single in the field,  
Yon solitary Highland Lass !  
Reaping and singing by herself ;  
Stop here, or gently pass !  
Alone she cuts and binds the grain,  
And sings a melancholy strain ;  
O listen ! for the Vale profound  
Is overflowing with the sound.



No Nightingale did ever chant  
 More welcome notes to weary bands  
 Of travellers in some shady haunt,  
 Among Arabian sands;  
 A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard  
 In spring-time from the Cuckoo-bird,  
 Breaking the silence of the seas  
 Among the farthest Hebrides.

Will no one tell me what she sings? —  
 Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow  
 For old, unhappy, far-off things,  
 And battles long ago;  
 Or is it some more humble lay,  
 Familiar matter of to-day?  
 Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,  
 That has been, and may be again?

Whate'er the theme, the maiden sang  
 As if her song could have no ending;  
 I saw her singing at her work,  
 And o'er the sickle bending; —  
 I listened, motionless and still;  
 And, as I mounted up the hill  
 The music in my heart I bore,  
 Long after it was heard no more.

1803. 1807.

### YARROW UNVISITED

See the various Poems the scene of which is laid  
 upon the banks of the Yarrow; in particular, the  
 exquisite Ballad of Hamilton beginning

"Busk ye, busk ye, my bonny, bonny Bride, —  
 Busk ye, busk ye, my winsome Marrow! —"  
 (Wordsworth.)

FROM Stirling castle we had seen  
 The mazy Forth unravelled;  
 Had trod the banks of Clyde, and Tay,  
 And with the Tweed had travelled;  
 And when we came to Clovenford,  
 Then said my "*winsome Marrow*,"  
 "Whate'er betide, we'll turn aside,  
 And see the Braes of Yarrow."

"Let Yarrow folk, *frae* Selkirk town,  
 Who have been buying, selling,  
 Go back to Yarrow, 'tis their own;  
 Each maiden to her dwelling!  
 On Yarrow's banks let herons feed,  
 Hares couch, and rabbits burrow!  
 But we will downward with the Tweed,  
 Nor turn aside to Yarrow.

"There's Galla Water, Leader Haughs,  
 Both lying right before us;

And Dryborough, where with chiming  
 Tweed  
 The lint whites sing in chorus;  
 There's pleasant Tivot-dale, a land  
 Made blithe with plough and harrow:  
 Why throw away a needful day  
 To go in search of Yarrow?

"What's Yarrow but a river bare,  
 That glides the dark hills under?  
 There are a thousand such elsewhere  
 As worthy of your wonder."  
 — Strange words they seemed of slight  
 and scorn  
 My True-love sighed for sorrow;  
 And looked me in the face, to think  
 I thus could speak of Yarrow!

"Oh! green," said I, "are Yarrow's holms,  
 And sweet is Yarrow flowing!  
 Fair hangs the apple frae the rock,  
 But we will leave it growing.  
 O'er hilly path, and open Strath,  
 We'll wander Scotland thorough;  
 But, though so near, we will not turn  
 Into the dale of Yarrow.

"Let beeves and home-bred kine partake  
 The sweets of Burn-mill meadow;  
 The swan on still St. Mary's Lake  
 Float double, swan and shadow!  
 We will not see them; will not go,  
 To-day, nor yet to-morrow,  
 Enough if in our hearts we know  
 There's such a place as Yarrow.

"Be Yarrow stream unseen, unknown!  
 It must, or we shall rue it:  
 We have a vision of our own;  
 Ah! why should we undo it?  
 The treasured dreams of times long  
 past,  
 We'll keep them, winsome Marrow!  
 For when we're there, although 'tis  
 fair.

'Twill be another Yarrow!

"If Care with freezing years should come,  
 And wandering seem but folly, —  
 Should we be loth to stir from home,  
 And yet be melancholy;  
 Should life be dull, and spirits low,  
 'Twill soothe us in our sorrow,  
 That earth has something yet to show,  
 The bonny holms of Yarrow!"

1803. 1807.



OCTOBER 1803

WHEN, looking on the present face of things,  
 I see one Man, of men the meanest too!  
 Raised up to sway the world, to do, undo,  
 With mighty Nations for his underlings,  
 The great events with which old story rings  
 Seem vain and hollow; I find nothing great:  
 Nothing is left which I can venerate;  
 So that a doubt almost within me springs  
 Of Providence, such emptiness at length  
 Seems at the heart of all things. But, great God!  
 I measure back the steps which I have trod:  
 And tremble, seeing whence proceeds the strength  
 Of such poor Instruments, with thoughts sublime  
 I tremble at the sorrow of the time.

1803. 1807.

## TO THE MEN OF KENT

OCTOBER 1803

VANGUARD of Liberty, ye men of Kent,  
 Ye children of a Soil that doth advance  
 Her haughty brow against the coast of France,  
 Now is the time to prove your hardiment!  
 To France be words of invitation sent!  
 They from their fields can see the countenance  
 Of your fierce war, may ken the glittering lance  
 And hear you shouting forth your brave intent.  
 Left single, in bold parley, ye, of yore,  
 Did from the Norman win a gallant wreath;  
 Confirmed the charters that were yours before;—  
 No parleying now! In Britain is one breath;  
 We all are with you now from shore to shore:—  
 Ye men of Kent, 'tis victory or death!

1803. 1807.



## ODE

INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY FROM RECOLLECTIONS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD

"In my *Ode on the Intimations of Immortality in Childhood*, I do not profess to give a literal representation of the state of the affections and of the moral being in childhood. I record my own feelings at that time—my absolute spirituality, my 'all-soulness,' if I may so speak. At that time I could not believe that I should lie down quietly in the grave, and that my body would moulder into dust." (Knight's *Wordsworth*, II, 326. See also, in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, the article "Poetry.")

I

THERE was a time when meadow, grove,  
 and stream,  
 The earth, and every common sight,  
 To me did seem  
 Apparelled in celestial light,  
 The glory and the freshness of a dream.  
 It is not now as it hath been of yore;—  
 Turn whereso'er I may,  
 By night or day,  
 The things which I have seen I now can  
 see no more.

II

The Rainbow comes and goes,  
 And lovely is the Rose,  
 The Moon doth with delight  
 Look round her when the heavens are bare;  
 Waters on a starry night  
 Are beautiful and fair;  
 The sunshine is a glorious birth;  
 But yet I know, where'er I go,  
 That there hath past away a glory from  
 the earth.

III

Now, while the birds thus sing a joyous song,  
 And while the young lambs bound  
 As to the tabor's sound,  
 To me alone there came a thought of grief;  
 A timely utterance gave that thought relief,  
 And I again am strong:  
 The cataracts blow their trumpets from the steep;  
 No more shall grief of mine the season wrong;  
 I hear the Echoes through the mountains throng,  
 The Winds come to me from the fields of sleep,

And all the earth is gay ;  
 Land and sea  
 Give themselves up to jollity,  
 And with the heart of May  
 Doth every Beast keep holiday ; —  
 Thou Child of Joy,  
 Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts,  
 thou happy Shepherd-boy !

## IV

Ye blessèd Creatures, I have heard the  
 call  
 Ye to each other make ; I see  
 The heavens laugh with you in your  
 jubilee ;  
 My heart is at your festival,  
 My head hath its coronal,  
 The fulness of your bliss, I feel — I feel  
 it all.  
 Oh evil day ! if I were sullen  
 While Earth herself is adorning,  
 This sweet May-morning,  
 And the Children are culling  
 On every side,  
 In a thousand valleys far and wide,  
 Fresh flowers ; while the sun shines  
 warm,  
 And the Babe leaps up on his Mother's  
 arm : —  
 I hear, I hear, with joy I hear !  
 — But there's a Tree, of many, one,  
 A single Field which I have looked upon,  
 Both of them speak of something that is  
 gone :  
 The Pansy at my feet  
 Doth the same tale repeat :  
 Whither is fled the visionary gleam ?  
 Where is it now, the glory and the dream ?

## V

Our birth is but a sleep and a forget-  
 ting :  
 The Soul that rises with us, our life's  
 Star,  
 Hath had elsewhere its setting,  
 And cometh from afar :  
 Not in entire forgetfulness,  
 And not in utter nakedness,  
 But trailing clouds of glory do we come  
 From God, who is our home :  
 Heaven lies about us in our infancy !  
 Shades of the prison-house begin to close  
 Upon the growing Boy,  
 But he beholds the light, and whence it  
 flows,  
 He sees it in his joy ;

The Youth, who daily farther from the  
 east  
 Must travel, still is Nature's Priest,  
 And by the vision splendid  
 Is on his way attended ;  
 At length the Man perceives it die away,  
 And fade into the light of common day.

## VI

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her  
 own ;  
 Yearnings she hath in her own natural  
 kind,  
 And, even with something of a Mother's  
 mind,  
 And no unworthy aim,  
 The homely Nurse doth all she can  
 To make her Foster-child, her Inmate  
 Man,  
 Forget the glories he hath known,  
 And that imperial palace whence he came.

## VII

Behold the Child among his new-born  
 blisses,  
 A six years' Darling of a pigmy size !  
 See, where 'mid work of his own hand  
 he lies,  
 Fretted by sallies of his mother's kisses,  
 With light upon him from his father's  
 eyes !  
 See, at his feet, some little plan or chart,  
 Some fragment from his dream of human  
 life,  
 Shaped by himself with newly-learned  
 art ;  
 A wedding or a festival,  
 A mourning or a funeral ;  
 And this hath now his heart,  
 And unto this he frames his song :  
 Then will he fit his tongue  
 To dialogues of business, love, or strife ;  
 But it will not be long  
 Ere this be thrown aside,  
 And with new joy and pride  
 The little Actor cons another part ;  
 Filling from time to time his "humorous  
 stage"  
 With all the Persons, down to palsied  
 Age,  
 That Life brings with her in her equi-  
 page ;  
 As if his whole vocation  
 Were endless imitation.

## VIII

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie

Thy Soul's immensity ;  
Thou best Philosopher, who yet dost keep  
Thy heritage, thou Eye among the blind,  
That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal deep,

Haunted for ever by the eternal mind, —

Mighty Prophet ! Seer blest !  
On whom those truths do rest,  
Which we are toiling all our lives to find,  
In darkness lost, the darkness of the grave ;

Thou, over whom thy Immortality  
Broods like the Day, a Master o'er a Slave,

A Presence which is not to be put by ;  
Thou little Child, yet glorious in the might

Of heaven-born freedom on thy being's height,

Why with such earnest pains dost thou provoke

The years to bring the inevitable yoke,  
Thus blindly with thy blessedness at strife ?

Full soon thy Soul shall have her earthly freight,

And custom lie upon thee with a weight,  
Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life !

## IX

O joy ! that in our embers  
Is something that doth live,  
That nature yet remembers  
What was so fugitive !

The thought of our past years in me doth breed

Perpetual benediction : not indeed  
For that which is most worthy to be blest —

Delight and liberty, the simple creed  
Of Childhood, whether busy or at rest,  
With new-fledged hope still fluttering  
in his breast : —

Not for these I raise  
The song of thanks and praise ;  
But for those obstinate questionings  
Of sense and outward things,  
Fallings from us, vanishings ;  
Blank misgivings of a Creature

Moving about in worlds not realized,  
High instincts before which our mortal Nature

Did tremble like a guilty Thing surprised :

But for those first affections,  
Those shadowy recollections,  
Which, be they what they may,  
Are yet the fountain light of all our day,  
Are yet a master light of all our seeing ;  
Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make

Our noisy years seem moments in the being

Of the eternal Silence : truths that wake,  
To perish never ;

Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavor,

Nor Man nor Boy,  
Nor all that is at enmity with joy,  
Can utterly abolish or destroy !

Hence in a season of calm weather  
Though inland far we be,  
Our Souls have sight of that immortal sea

Which brought us hither,  
Can in a moment travel thither,

And see the Children sport upon the shore,

And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

## X

Then sing, ye Birds, sing, sing a joyous song !

And let the young Lambs bound  
As to the tabor's sound !

We in thought will join your throng,  
Ye that pipe and ye that play,  
Ye that through your hearts to-day

Feel the gladness of the May !  
What though the radiance which was once so bright

Be now forever taken from my sight,  
Though nothing can bring back the hour

Of splendor in the grass, of glory in the flower ;

We will grieve not, rather find  
Strength in what remains behind ;

In the primal sympathy  
Which having been must ever be ;

In the soothing thoughts that spring  
Out of human suffering ;

In the faith that looks through death,  
In years that bring the philosophic mind.

## XI

And O ye Fountains, Meadows, Hills,  
and Groves,

Forebode not any severing of our loves !

Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your  
might;

I only have relinquished one delight  
To live beneath your more habitual  
sway.

I love the Brooks which down their chan-  
nels fret,

Even more than when I tripped lightly  
as they;

The innocent brightness of a new-born  
Day

Is lovely yet;

The Clouds that gather round the setting  
sun

Do take a sober coloring from an eye  
That hath kept watch o'er man's mor-  
tality;

Another race hath been, and other palms  
are won.

Thanks to the human heart by which we  
live,

Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and  
fears,

To me the meanest flower that blows  
can give

Thoughts that do often lie too deep for  
tears. 1803-6. 1807.

### TO THE CUCKOO

O BLITHE New-comer! I have heard,  
I hear thee and rejoice.

O Cuckoo! shall I call thee Bird,  
Or but a wandering Voice?

While I am lying on the grass  
Thy twofold shout I hear,  
From hill to hill it seems to pass,  
At once far off, and near.

Though babbling only to the Vale,  
Of sunshine and of flowers,  
Thou bringest unto me a tale  
Of visionary hours.

Thrice welcome, darling of the Spring!  
Even yet thou art to me  
No bird, but an invisible thing,  
A voice, a mystery;

The same whom in my school-boy days  
I listened to; that Cry  
Which made me look a thousand ways  
In bush, and tree, and sky.

To seek thee did I often rove  
Through woods and on the green;  
And thou wert still a hope, a love;  
Still longed for, never seen.

And I can listen to thee yet;  
Can lie upon the plain  
And listen, till I do beget  
That golden time again.

O blessèd Bird! the earth we pace  
Again appears to be  
An unsubstantial, faery place;  
That is fit home for Thee!

1802. 1807.

### SHE WAS A PHANTOM OF DELIGHT

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. The germ of  
this poem was four lines composed as a part of the  
verses on the Highland Girl. Though beginning in  
this way, it was written from my heart, as is suffi-  
ciently obvious. (*Wordsworth.*)

SHE was a Phantom of delight  
When first she gleamed upon my sight;  
A lovely Apparition sent  
To be a moment's ornament;  
Her eyes as stars of Twilight fair;  
Like Twilight's too, her dusky hair;  
But all things else about her drawn  
From May-time and the cheerful Dawn;  
A dancing Shape, an Image gay,  
To haunt, to startle, and way-lay.

I saw her upon nearer view,  
A Spirit, yet a Woman too!  
Her household motions light and free,  
And steps of virgin-liberty;  
A countenance in which did meet  
Sweet records, promises as sweet;  
A Creature not too bright or good  
For human nature's daily food;  
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,  
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and  
smiles.

And now I see with eye serene  
The very pulse of the machine;  
A Being breathing thoughtful breath,  
A Traveller between life and death;  
The reason firm, the temperate will,  
Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill;  
A perfect Woman, nobly planned,  
To warn, to comfort, and command;  
And yet a Spirit still, and bright  
With something of angelic light.

1804. 1807.

### I WANDERED LONELY AS A CLOUD

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. The Daffodils grew and still grow on the margin of Ulls-water, and probably may be seen to this day as beautiful in the month of March, nodding their golden heads beside the dancing and foaming waves. (*Wordsworth.*)

I WANDERED lonely as a cloud  
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,  
When all at once I saw a crowd,  
A host, of golden daffodils;  
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,  
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine  
And twinkle on the milky way,  
They stretched in never-ending line  
Along the margin of a bay:  
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,  
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they  
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:  
A poet could not but be gay,  
In such a jocund company:  
I gazed — and gazed — but little thought  
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie  
In vacant or in pensive mood,  
They flash upon that inward eye  
Which is the bliss of solitude;  
And then my heart with pleasure fills,  
And dances with the daffodils.

1804. 1807.

### THE AFFLICTION OF MARGARET

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. This was taken from the case of a poor widow who lived in the town of Penrith. Her sorrow was well known to Mrs. Wordsworth, to my Sister, and, I believe, to the whole town. She kept a shop, and when she saw a stranger passing by, she was in the habit of going out into the street to enquire of him after her son. (*Wordsworth.*)

WHERE art thou, my beloved Son,  
Where art thou, worse to me than dead!  
Oh find me, prosperous or undone!  
Or, if the grave be now thy bed,  
Why am I ignorant of the same,  
That I may rest, and neither blame  
Nor sorrow may attend thy name?

Seven years, alas! to have received  
No tidings of an only child;  
To have despaired, have hoped, believed,  
And been for evermore beguiled;  
Sometimes with thoughts of very bliss!  
I catch at them, and then I miss;  
Was ever darkness like to this?

He was among the prime in worth,  
An object beauteous to behold;  
Well born, well bred; I sent him forth  
Ingenuous, innocent, and bold:  
If things ensued that wanted grace,  
As hath been said, they were not base;  
And never blush was on my face.

Ah! little doth the young one dream,  
When full of play and childish cares,  
What power is in his wildest scream,  
Heard by his mother unawares!  
He knows it not, he cannot guess:  
Years to a mother bring distress;  
But do not make her love the less.

Neglect me! No, I suffered long  
From that ill thought; and, being blind,  
Said, "Pride shall help me in my wrong;  
Kind mother have I been, as kind  
As ever breathed:" and that is true;  
I've wet my path with tears like dew,  
Weeping for him when no one knew.

My Son, if thou be humbled, poor,  
Hopeless of honor and of gain,  
Oh! do not dread thy mother's door;  
Think not of me with grief and pain:  
I now can see with better eyes;  
And worldly grandeur I despise,  
And fortune with her gifts and lies.

Alas! the fowls of heaven have wings,  
And blasts of heaven will aid their flight:  
They mount — how short a voyage brings  
The wanderers back to their delight!  
Chains tie us down by land and sea;  
And wishes, vain as mine, may be  
All that is left to comfort thee.

Perhaps some dungeon hears thee groan,  
Maimed, mangled by inhuman men;  
Or thou upon a desert thrown  
Inheritest the lion's den;  
Or hast been summoned to the deep,  
Thou, thou and all thy mates, to keep  
An incommunicable sleep.



I look for ghosts . but none will force  
 Their way to me : 'tis falsely said  
 That there was ever intercourse  
 Between the living and the dead ;  
 For, surely, then I should have sight  
 Of him I wait for day and night,  
 With love and longings infinite.

My apprehensions come in crowds ;  
 I dread the rustling of the grass ;  
 The very shadows of the clouds  
 Have power to shake me as they pass :  
 I question things and do not find  
 One that will answer to my mind ;  
 And all the world appears unkind.

Beyond participation lie  
 My troubles, and beyond relief :  
 If any chance to heave a sigh,  
 They pity me, and not my grief.  
 Then come to me, my Son, or send  
 Some tidings that my woes may end ;  
 I have no other earthly friend !

1804. 1807.



### ODE TO DUTY

STERN Daughter of the Voice of God !  
 O Duty ! if that name thou love  
 Who art a light to guide, a rod  
 To check the erring, and reprove ;  
 Thou, who art victory and law  
 When empty terrors overawe :  
 From vain temptations dost set free :  
 And calm'st the weary strife of frail  
 humanity !

There are who ask not if thine eye  
 Be on them ; who, in love and truth,  
 Where no misgiving is, rely  
 Upon the genial sense of youth :  
 Glad Hearts ! without reproach or blot  
 Who do thy work, and know it not :  
 Oh ! if through confidence misplaced  
 They fail, thy saving arms, dread  
 Power ! around them cast.

Serene will be our days and bright,  
 And happy will our nature be,  
 When love is an unerring light,  
 And joy its own security.  
 And they a blissful course may hold  
 Even now, who, not unwisely bold,  
 Live in the spirit of this creed ;  
 Yet seek thy firm support, according to  
 their need.

I, loving freedom, and untried,  
 No sport of every random gust,  
 Yet being to myself a guide,  
 Too blindly have reposed my trust :  
 And oft, when in my heart was heard  
 Thy timely mandate, I deferred  
 The task, in smoother walks to stray ;  
 But thee I now would serve more strictly,  
 if I may.

Through no disturbance of my soul,  
 Or strong compunction in me wrought,  
 I supplicate for thy control ;  
 But in the quietness of thought :  
 Me this unchartered freedom tires ;  
 I feel the weight of chance-desires :  
 My hopes no more must change their  
 name,  
 I long for a repose that ever is the same.

Stern Lawgiver ! yet thou dost wear  
 The Godhead's most benignant grace ;  
 Nor know we anything so fair  
 As is the smile upon thy face :  
 Flowers laugh before thee on their beds  
 And fragrance in thy footing treads ;  
 Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong ;  
 And the most ancient heavens, through  
 Thee, are fresh and strong.

To humbler functions, awful Power !  
 I call thee : I myself commend  
 Unto thy guidance from this hour ;  
 Oh, let my weakness have an end !  
 Give unto me, made lowly wise,  
 The spirit of self-sacrifice ;  
 The confidence of reason give ;  
 And in the light of truth thy Bondman  
 let me live ! 1805. 1807.

### TO A SKY-LARK

Up with me ! up with me into the clouds !  
 For thy song, Lark, is strong ;  
 Up with me, up with me into the clouds !  
 Singing, singing,  
 With clouds and sky about thee ringing  
 Lift me, guide me till I find  
 That spot which seems so to thy mind !

I have walked through wildernesses  
 dreary  
 And to-day my heart is weary ;  
 Had I now the wings of a Faery,

Up to thee would I fly.  
 There is madness about thee, and joy  
     divine  
 In that song of thine;  
 Lift me, guide me high and high  
 To thy banqueting-place in the sky.

    Joyous as morning  
 Thou art laughing and scorning;  
 Thou hast a nest for thy love and thy rest.  
 And, though little troubled with sloth,  
 Drunken Lark! thou would'st be loth  
 To be such a traveller as I.  
 Happy, happy Liver,  
 With a soul as strong as a mountain river  
 Pouring out praise to the Almighty Giver,  
 Joy and jollity be with us both!

Alas! my journey, rugged and uneven,  
 Through prickly moors or dusty ways  
     must wind;  
 But hearing thee, or others of thy kind,  
 As full of gladness and as free of heaven,  
 I, with my fate contented, will plod on,  
 And hope for higher raptures, when life's  
     day is done.      1805. 1807.

### ELEGIAC STANZAS

SUGGESTED BY A PICTURE OF PEELE  
 CASTLE, IN A STORM, PAINTED BY SIR  
     GEORGE BEAUMONT

I WAS thy neighbor once, thou rugged  
     Pile!  
 Four summer weeks I dwelt in sight of  
     thee:

I saw thee every day; and all the while  
 Thy Form was sleeping on a glassy sea.

So pure the sky, so quiet was the air!  
 So like, so very like, was day to day!  
 Whene'er I looked, thy Image still was  
     there;  
 It trembled, but it never passed away.

How perfect was the calm! it seemed no  
     sleep;  
 No mood, which season takes away, or  
     brings:  
 I could have fancied that the mighty Deep  
 Was even the gentlest of all gentle Things.

Ah! THEN, if mine had been the Painter's  
     hand,

To express what then I saw; and add  
     the gleam,  
 The light that never was, on sea or land.  
 The consecration, and the Poet's dream;

I would have planted thee, thou hoary  
     Pile

Amid a world how different from this!  
 Beside a sea that could not cease to smile;  
 On tranquil land, beneath a sky of bliss.

Thou shouldst have seemed a treasure-  
     house divine  
 Of peaceful years; a chronicle of  
     heaven;—  
 Of all the sunbeams that did ever shine  
 The very sweetest had to thee been given.

A picture had it been of lasting ease,  
 Elysian quiet, without toil or strife;  
 No motion but the moving tide, a breeze,  
 Or merely silent Nature's breathing life.

Such, in the fond illusion of my heart,  
 Such Picture would I at that time have  
     made:

And seen the soul of truth in every part,  
 A steadfast peace that might not be  
     betrayed.

So once it would have been, — 'tis so no  
     more;  
 I have submitted to a new control:  
 A power is gone, which nothing can  
     restore;  
 A deep distress hath humanized my Soul.

Not for a moment could I now behold  
 A smiling sea, and be what I have been:  
 The feeling of my loss will ne'er be old;  
 This, which I know, I speak with mind  
     serene.

Then, Beaumont, Friend! who would  
     have been the Friend,  
 If he had lived, of Him whom I deplore,  
 This work of thine I blame not, but com-  
     mend;  
 This sea in anger, and that dismal shore.

O 'tis a passionate Work! — yet wise and  
     well,  
 Well chosen in the spirit that is here;  
 That Hulk which labors in the deadly  
     swell,  
 This rueful sky, this pageantry of fear!

And this huge Castle, standing here sublime

I love to see the look with which it braves,  
Cased in the unfeeling armor of old time,  
The lightning, the fierce wind, and  
trampling waves.

Farewell, farewell the heart that lives  
alone,

Housed in a dream, at distance from the  
Kind!

Such happiness, wherever it be known,  
Is to be pitied; for 'tis surely blind.

But welcome fortitude, and patient cheer,  
And frequent sights of what is to be borne!  
Such sights, or worse, as are before me  
here. —

Not without hope we suffer and we  
mourn. 1805. 1807.

### TO A YOUNG LADY

WHO HAD BEEN REPROACHED FOR TAK-  
ING LONG WALKS IN THE COUNTRY

DEAR Child of Nature, let them rail!

— There is a nest in a green dale,

A harbor and a hold;

Where thou, a Wife and Friend, shalt see  
Thy own heart-stirring days, and be  
A light to young and old.

There, healthy as a shepherd boy,  
And treading among flowers of joy  
Which at no season fade,  
Thou, while thy babes around thee cling,  
Shalt show us how divine a thing  
A Woman may be made.

Thy thoughts and feelings shall not die,  
Nor leave thee, when gray hairs are nigh,  
A melancholy slave;  
But an old age serene and bright,  
And lovely as a Lapland night,  
Shall lead thee to thy grave.

1801? February 11, 1802.

### FRENCH REVOLUTION

AS IT APPEARED TO ENTHUSIASTS AT ITS  
COMMENCEMENT

An extract from the long poem of my own poet-  
ical education. It was first published by Coleridge

in his *Friend*, which is the reason of its having  
had a place in every edition of my poems since.  
(*Wordsworth*.) From *The Prelude*, Bk. XI.

Oh! pleasant exercise of hope and joy!  
For mighty were the auxiliars which then  
stood

Upon our side, we who were strong in  
love!

Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,  
~~But to be young was very heaven! —~~

Oh! times,  
In which the meagre, stale, forbidding  
ways

Of custom, law, and statute, took at once  
The attraction of a country in romance!  
When Reason seemed the most to assert  
her rights,

When most intent on making of herself  
A prime Enchantress—to assist the  
work,

Which then was going forward in her  
name!

Not favored spots alone, but the whole  
earth,

The beauty wore of promise, that which  
sets

(As at some moment might not be unfelt  
Among the bowers of paradise itself)  
The budding rose above the rose full  
blown.

What temper at the prospect did not  
wake

To happiness unthought of? The inert  
Were roused, and lively natures rapt  
away!

They who had fed their childhood upon  
dreams,

The playfellows of fancy, who had made  
All powers of swiftness, subtilty, and  
strength

Their ministers, — who in lordly wise had  
stirred

Among the grandest objects of the sense,  
And dealt with whatsoever they found  
there

As if they had within some lurking right  
To wield it; — they, too, who, of gentle  
mood,

Had watched all gentle motions, and to  
these

Had fitted their own thoughts, schemers  
more mild,

And in the region of their peaceful  
selves; —

Now was it that both found, the meek  
and lofty

Did both find, helpers to their heart's  
 desire,  
 And stuff at hand, plastic as they could  
 wish;  
 Were called upon to exercise their skill,  
 Not in Utopia, subterranean fields,  
 Or some secreted island, Heaven knows  
 where!

But in the very world, which is the world  
 Of all of us, — the place where in the end  
 We find our happiness, or not at all!

1804. October 26, 1809.

### CHARACTER OF THE 'HAPPY WARRIOR

Suggested in part by an event which all England was lamenting — the death of Lord Nelson — and in part by the personal loss, which he still felt so keenly, his brother John's removal. On the 4th of February, 1806, Southey wrote thus to Sir Walter Scott: " . . . Wordsworth was with me last week: he has been of late more employed in correcting his poems than in writing others; but one piece he has written, upon the ideal character of a soldier, than which I have never seen anything more full of meaning and sound thought. The subject was suggested by Nelson's most glorious death. . . ." (*Knight's Life of Wordsworth*, II, 46-7.)

Who is the happy Warrior? Who is he  
 That every man in arms should wish to  
 be?

— It is the generous Spirit, who, when  
 brought

Among the tasks of real life, hath wrought  
 Upon the plan that pleased his boyish  
 thought:

Whose high endeavors are an inward  
 light

That makes the path before him always  
 bright:

Who, with a natural instinct to discern  
 What knowledge can perform, is dili-  
 gent to learn;

Abides by this resolve, and stops not  
 there,

But makes his moral being his prime care;  
 Who, doomed to go in company with

Pain,  
 And Fear, and Bloodshed, miserable  
 train!

Turns his necessity to glorious gain;  
 In face of these doth exercise a power

Which is our human nature's highest  
 dower;

Controls them and subdues, transmutes,  
 bereaves

Of their bad influence, and their good  
 receives:

By objects, which might force the soul  
 to abate

Her feeling, rendered more compassion-  
 ate;

Is placable — because occasions rise  
 So often that demand such sacrifice;

More skilful in self-knowledge, even  
 more pure,

As tempted more; more able to endure,  
 As more exposed to suffering and dis-  
 tress;

Thence, also, more alive to tenderness.

— 'Tis he whose law is reason; who de-  
 pends

Upon that law as on the best of friends;  
 Whence, in a state where men are tempted  
 still

To evil for a guard against worse ill,  
 And what in quality or act is best

Doth seldom on a right foundation rest,  
 He labors good on good to fix, and owes

To virtue every triumph that he knows:  
 — Who, if he rise to station of command,

Rises by open means; and there will stand  
 On honorable terms, or else retire,

And in himself possess his own desire;  
 Who comprehends his trust, and to the

same  
 Keeps faithful with a singleness of aim;

And therefore does not stoop, nor lie in  
 wait

For wealth, or honors, or for worldly  
 state;

Whom they must follow; on whose head  
 must fall,

Like showers of manna, if they come at  
 all:

Whose powers shed round him in the  
 common strife,

Or mild concerns of ordinary life,  
 A constant influence, a peculiar grace;

But who, if he be called upon to face  
 Some awful moment to which Heaven has

joined  
 Great issues, good or bad for human kind,

Is happy as a Lover; and attired  
 With sudden brightness, like a Man in-  
 spired;

And, through the heat of conflict, keeps  
 the law

In calmness made, and sees what he fore-  
 saw;

Or if an unexpected call succeed,  
 Come when it will, is equal to the need:

— He who, though thus endued as with  
a sense

And faculty for storm and turbulence,  
Is yet a Soul whose master-bias leans  
To homefelt pleasures and to gentle  
scenes;

Sweet images! which, wheresoe'er he be,  
Are at his heart; and such fidelity  
It is his darling passion to approve;  
More brave for this, that he hath much  
to love: —

'Tis, finally, the Man, who, lifted high,  
Conspicuous object in a Nation's eye,  
Or left unthought-of in obscurity, —  
Who, with a toward or untoward lot,  
Prosperous or adverse, to his wish or  
not —

Plays, in the many games of life, that one  
Where what he most doth value must be  
won:

Whom neither shape of danger can dis-  
may,

Nor thought of tender happiness betray;  
Who, not content that former worth stand  
fast,

Looks forward, persevering to the last,  
From well to better, daily self-surpast:  
Who, whether praise of him must walk  
the earth

For ever, and to noble deeds give birth,  
Or he must fall, to sleep without his  
fame,

And leave a dead unprofitable name —  
Finds comfort in himself and in his  
cause;

And, while the moral mist is gathering,  
draws

His breath in confidence of Heaven's  
applause:

This is the happy Warrior; this is He  
That every Man in arms should wish to  
be. 1806. 1807.

#### YES, IT WAS THE MOUNTAIN ECHO

Yes, it was the mountain Echo,  
Solitary, clear, profound,  
Answering to the shouting Cuckoo,  
Giving to her sound for sound!

Unsolicited reply  
To a babbling wanderer sent;  
Like her ordinary cry,  
Like — but oh, how different!

Hears not also mortal Life?  
Hear not we, unthinking Creatures!  
Slaves of folly, love, or strife —  
Voices of two different natures?

Have not *we* too? — yes, we have  
Answers, and we know not whence;  
Echoes from beyond the grave,  
Recognized intelligence!

Such rebounds our inward ear  
Catches sometimes from afar —  
Listen, ponder, hold them dear;  
For of God, — of God they are.

1806. 1807.

#### NUNS FRET NOT AT THEIR CONVENT'S NARROW ROOM

In the cottage, Town-end, Grasmere, one after-  
noon in 1801, my sister read to me the Sonnets of  
Milton. I had long been well acquainted with  
them, but I was particularly struck on that occasion  
with the dignified simplicity and majestic harmony  
that runs through most of them, — in character so  
totally different from the Italian, and still more so  
from Shakespeare's fine Sonnets. I took fire, if I  
may be allowed to say so, and produced three  
Sonnets the same afternoon, the first I ever wrote  
except an irregular one at school. Of these three,  
the only one I distinctly remember is — "I grieved  
for Buonaparté." One was never written down:  
the third, which was, I believe, preserved, I cannot  
particularize. (*Wordsworth.*)

NUNS fret not at their convent's narrow  
room;

And hermits are contented with their  
cells;

And students with their pensive citadels;  
Maids at the wheel, the weaver at his  
loom,

Sit blithe and happy; bees that soar for  
bloom,

High as the highest Peak of Furness-fells,  
Will murmur by the hour in foxglove  
bells:

In truth the prison, unto which we doom  
Ourselves, no prison is: and hence for me,  
In sundry moods, 'twas pastime to be  
bound

Within the Sonnet's scanty plot of  
ground;

Pleased if some Souls (for such there needs  
must be)

Who have felt the weight of too much  
liberty,

Should find brief solace there, as I have  
found. 1806? 1807.



## PERSONAL TALK

## I

I AM not One who much or ft delight  
To season my fireside with personal  
talk —

Of friends, who live within an easy walk,  
Or neighbors, daily, weekly, in my sight :  
And, for my chance-acquaintance, ladies  
bright,

Sons, mothers, maidens withering on the  
stalk,

These all wear out of me, like Forms, with  
chalk

Painted on rich men's floors, for one feast-  
night.

Better than such discourse doth silence  
long,

Long, barren silence, square with my  
desire ;

To sit without emotion, hope, or aim,  
In the loved presence of my cottage-fire,  
And listen to the flapping of the flame,  
Or kettle whispering its faint undersong.

## II

"Yet life," you say, "is life ; we have seen  
and see,

And with a living pleasure we describe ;  
And fits of sprightly malice do but bribe  
The languid mind into activity.

Sound sense, and love itself, and mirth  
and glee

Are fostered by the comment and the  
gibe."

Even be it so ; yet still among your tribe,  
Our daily world's true Worldlings, rank  
not me !

Children are blest, and powerful ; their  
world lies

More justly balanced ; partly at their  
feet,

And part far from them : sweetest mel-  
odies

Are those that are by distance made more  
sweet ;

Whose mind is but the mind of his own  
eyes,

He is a Slave ; the meanest we can meet !

## III

Wings have we, — and as far as we can  
go,

We may find pleasure : wilderness and  
wood,

Blank ocean and mere sky, support that  
mood

Which with the lofty sanctifies the low.  
Dreams, books are each a world ; and  
books, we know,

Are a substantial world, both pure and  
good :

Round these, with tendrils strong as flesh  
and blood,

Our pastime and our happiness will grow.  
There find I personal themes, a plenteous  
store,

Matter wherein right voluble I am,  
To which I listen with a ready ear ;

Two shall be named, pre-eminently  
dear, —

The gentle Lady married to the Moor ;  
And heavenly Una with her milk-white  
Lamb.

## IV

Nor can I not believe but that hereby  
Great gains are mine ; — for thus I live  
remote

From evil-speaking ; rancor, never sought,  
Comes to me not ; malignant truth, or  
lie.

Hence have I genial seasons, hence have I  
Smooth passions, smooth discourse, and  
joyous thought :

And thus from day to day my little boat  
Rocks in its harbor, lodging peaceably.

Blessings be with them — and eternal  
praise,

Who gave us nobler loves, and nobler  
cares —

The Poets, who on earth have made us  
heirs

Of truth and pure delight by heavenly  
lays !

Oh ! might my name be numbered among  
theirs,

Then gladly would I end my mortal  
days. 1806? 1807.

THE WORLD IS TOO MUCH  
WITH US

THE world is too much with us ; late and  
soon,

Getting and spending, we lay waste our  
powers :

Little we see in Nature that is ours ;  
We have given our hearts away, a sordid  
boon !

The Sea that bares her bosom to the moon;  
 The winds that will be howling at all hours,  
 And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers:  
 For this, for everything, we are out of tune;  
 It moves us not. — Great God! I'd rather be  
 A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn;  
 So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,  
 Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;  
 Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;  
 Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn.  
 1806? 1807.

## TO SLEEP

A FLOCK of sheep that leisurely pass by,  
 One after one; the sound of rain, and bees  
 Murmuring: the fall of rivers, winds and seas,  
 Smooth fields, white sheets of water, and pure sky;  
 I have thought of all by turns, and yet do lie  
 Sleepless! and soon the small birds' melodies  
 Must hear, first uttered from my orchard trees;  
 And the first cuckoo's melancholy cry.  
 Even thus last night, and two nights more, I lay,  
 And could not win thee, Sleep! by any stealth:  
 So do not let me wear to-night away:  
 Without Thee what is all the morning's wealth?  
 Come, blessed barrier between day and day,  
 Dear mother of fresh thoughts of joyous health!  
 1806? 1807.

## NOVEMBER 1806

ANOTHER year! — another deadly blow!  
 Another mighty Empire overthrown!  
 And We are left, or shall be left, alone;  
 The last that dare to struggle with the Foe.  
 'Tis well! from this day forward we shall know

That in ourselves our safety must be sought;  
 That by our own right hands it must be wrought;  
 That we must stand unpropped, or be laid low.  
 O dastard whom such foretaste doth not cheer!  
 We shall exult, if they who rule the land  
 Be men who hold its many blessings dear,  
 Wise, upright, valiant; not a servile band,  
 Who are to judge of danger which they fear,  
 And honor which they do not understand.  
 1806. 1807.

THOUGHT OF A BRITON ON THE  
SUBJUGATION OF SWITZERLAND

Two Voices are there; one is of the sea,  
 One of the mountains; each a mighty Voice:  
 In both from age to age thou didst rejoice,  
 They were thy chosen music, Liberty!  
 There came a Tyrant, and with holy glee  
 Thou fought'st against him; but hast vainly striven:  
 Thou from thy Alpine holds at length art driven,  
 Where not a torrent murmurs heard by thee.  
 Of one deep bliss thine ear hath been bereft:  
 Then cleave, O cleave to that which still is left;  
 For, high-souled Maid, what sorrow would it be  
 That mountain floods should thunder as before,  
 And Ocean bellow from his rocky shore,  
 And neither awful Voice be heard by thee?  
 1807. 1807.

HERE PAUSE: THE POET CLAIMS  
AT LEAST THIS PRAISE

HERE pause: the poet claims at least this praise,  
 That virtuous Liberty hath been the scope  
 Of his pure song, which did not shrink from hope  
 In the worst moment of these evil days;

From hope, the paramount *duty* that  
 Heaven lays,  
 For its own honor, on man's suffering  
 heart.  
 Never may from our souls one truth  
 depart —  
 That an accursed thing it is to gaze  
 On prosperous tyrants with a dazzled  
 eye;  
 Nor — touched with due abhorrence of  
*their* guilt  
 For whose dire ends tears flow, and blood  
 is spilt,  
 And justice labors in extremity —  
 Forget thy weakness, upon which is built  
 O wretched man, the throne of tyranny!  
 1811. 1815.

### UPON THE SIGHT OF A BEAUTIFUL PICTURE

PAINTED BY SIR G. H. BEAUMONT, BART.

PRAISED be the Art whose subtle power  
 could stay  
 Yon cloud, and fix it in that glorious  
 shape;  
 Nor would permit the thin smoke to  
 escape,  
 Nor those bright sunbeams to forsake the  
 day;  
 Which stopped that band of travellers on  
 their way,  
 Ere they were lost within the shady wood;  
 And showed the Bark upon the glassy  
 flood  
 For ever anchored in her sheltering bay.  
 Soul-soothing Art! whom Morning,  
 Noontide, Even,  
 Do serve with all their changeful pag-  
 eantry;  
 Thou, with ambition modest yet sublime,  
 Here, for the sight of mortal man, hast  
 given  
 To one brief moment caught from fleeting  
 time  
 The appropriate calm of blest eternity.  
 1811. 1815.

### LAODAMIA

Written at Rydal Mount. The incident of the  
 trees growing and withering put the subject into  
 my thoughts, and I wrote with the hope of giving  
 it a loftier tone than, so far as I know, has been

given to it by any of the Ancients who have treated  
 of it. It cost me more trouble than almost any-  
 thing of equal length I have ever written. (*Words-  
 worth.*)

"Laodamia is a very original poem; I mean  
 original with reference to your own manner.  
 You have nothing like it. I should have seen it in  
 a strange place, and greatly admired it, but not  
 suspected its derivation . . ." (Lamb to Words-  
 worth. Talfourd's *Final Memorials of Charles Lamb*.  
 p. 151.)

"WITH sacrifice before the rising morn  
 Vows have I made by fruitless hope in-  
 spired;  
 And from the infernal Gods, 'mid shades  
 forlorn  
 Of night, my slaughtered Lord have I  
 required:  
 Celestial pity I again implore; —  
 Restore him to my sight — great Jove,  
 restore!"

So speaking, and by fervent love en-  
 dowed  
 With faith, the Suppliant heavenward  
 lifts her hands;  
 While, like the sun emerging from a cloud,  
 Her countenance brightens — and her  
 eye expands;  
 Her bosom heaves and spreads, her  
 stature grows;  
 And she expects the issue in repose.

O terror! what hath she perceived? —  
 O joy!  
 What doth she look on? — whom doth  
 she behold?  
 Her Hero slain upon the beach of Troy?  
 His vital presence? his corporeal mould!  
 It is — if sense deceive her not — 'tis He?  
 And a God leads him, wingèd Mercury!

Mild Hermes spake — and touched her  
 with his wand  
 That calms all fear; "Such grace hath  
 crowned thy prayer,  
 Laodamia! that at Jove's command  
 Thy Husband walks the paths of upper  
 air:  
 He comes to tarry with thee three hours'  
 space;  
 Accept the gift, behold him face to face!"

Forth sprang the impassioned Queen her  
 Lord to clasp;  
 Again that consummation she essayed;  
 But unsubstantial Form eludes her grasp  
 As often as that eager grasp was made,

The Phantom parts — but parts to reunite,  
And re-assume his place before her sight.

"Protesiláus, lo! thy guide is gone!  
Confirm, I pray, the vision with thy voice:

This is our palace, — yonder is thy throne;  
Speak, and the floor thou tread'st on will rejoice.

Not to appal me have the gods bestowed  
This precious boon; and blest a sad abode."

"Great Jove, Laodamía! doth not leave  
His gifts imperfect: — Spectre though I be,

I am not sent to scare thee or deceive;  
But in reward of thy fidelity.  
And something also did my worth obtain;  
For fearless virtue bringeth boundless gain.

"Thou knowest, the Delphic oracle foretold

That the first Greek who touched the Trojan strand  
Should die; but me the threat could not withhold;

A generous cause a victim did demand;  
And forth I leapt upon the sandy plain;  
A self-devoted chief — by Hector slain."

"Supreme of Heroes — bravest, noblest, best!

Thy matchless courage I bewail no more,  
Which then, when tens of thousands were deprest

By doubt, propelled thee to the fatal shore;

Thou found'st — and I forgive thee — here thou art —

A nobler counsellor than my poor heart.

"But thou, though capable of sternest deed,

Wert kind as resolute, and good as brave;  
And he, whose power restores thee, hath decreed

Thou should'st elude the malice of the grave:

Redundant are thy locks, thy lips as fair

As when their breath enriched Thessalian air.

"No Spectre greets me, — no vain Shadow this;

Come, blooming Hero, place thee by my side!

Give, on this well-known couch, one nuptial kiss

To me, this day, a second time thy bride!"

Jove frowned in heaven: the conscious Parcæ threw

Upon those roseate lips a Stygian hue.

"This visage tells thee that my doom is past:

Nor should the change be mourned, even if the joys

Of sense were able to return as fast  
And surely as they vanish. Earth destroys

Those raptures duly — Erebus disdains;  
Calm pleasures there abide — majestic pains.

"Be taught, O faithful Consort, to control

Rebellious passion: for the Gods approve  
The depth, and not the tumult, of the soul;

A fervent, not ungovernable, love.  
Thy transports moderate; and meekly mourn

When I depart, for brief is my sojourn —"

"Ah, wherefore? — Did not Hercules by force

Wrest from the guardian Monster of the tomb

Alcestis, a reanimated corse,  
Given back to dwell on earth in vernal bloom?

Medea's spells dispersed the weight of years,

And Æson stood a youth 'mid youthful peers.

"The Gods to us are merciful — and they

Yet further may relent: for mightier far

Than strength of nerve and sinew, or the sway

Of magic potent over sun and star,  
Is love, though oft to agony distrest,

And though his favorite seat be feeble woman's breast.

"But if thou goest, I follow —" "Peace!"  
he said; —

She looked upon him and was calmed and  
cheered;

The ghastly color from his lips had fled;  
In his deportment, shape, and mien,  
appeared

Elysian beauty, melancholy grace,  
Brought from a pensive though a happy  
place.

He spake of love, such love as Spirits feel  
In worlds whose course is equable and  
pure;

No fears to beat away — no strife to heal —  
The past unsighed for, and the future sure;  
Spake of heroic arts in graver mood  
Revived, with finer harmony pursued;

Of all that is most beauteous — imaged  
there

In happier beauty; more pellucid  
streams,

An ampler ether, a diviner air,  
And fields invested with purpureal  
gleams;

Climes which the sun, who sheds the  
brightest day

Earth knows, is all unworthy to survey.

Yet there the Soul shall enter which hath  
earned

That privilege by virtue. "Ill," said he,  
"The end of man's existence I discerned,  
Who from ignoble games and revelry  
Could draw, when we had parted, vain  
delight,

While tears were thy best pastime, day  
and night;

"And while my youthful peers before my  
eyes

(Each hero following his peculiar bent)  
Prepared themselves for glorious enter-  
prise

By martial sports, — or, seated in the  
tent,

Chieftains and kings in council were de-  
tained;

What time the fleet at Aulis lay  
enchained.

"The wished-for wind was given: — I  
then revolved

The oracle, upon the silent sea;  
And, if no worthier led the way, resolved

That, of a thousand vessels, mine should  
be

The foremost prow in pressing to the  
strand, —

Mine the first blood that tinged the Tro-  
jan sand.

"Yet bitter, oft-times bitter was the pang  
When of thy loss I thought, beloved  
Wife!

On thee too fondly did my memory hang,  
And on the joys we shared in mortal  
life, —

The paths which we had trod — these  
fountains, flowers,

My new-planned cities, and unfinished  
towers.

"But should suspense permit the Foe to  
cry,

'Behold they tremble! — haughty their  
array,

Yet of their number no one dares to die?'  
In soul I swept the indignity away:

Old frailties then recurred: — but lofty  
thought,

In act embodied, my deliverance wrought.

"And Thou, though strong in love, art  
all too weak

In reason, in self-government too slow;  
I counsel thee by fortitude to seek

Our blest re-union in the shades below.  
The invisible world with thee hath sym-  
pathized;

Be thy affections raised and solemnized.

"Learn, by a mortal yearning, to as-  
cend —

Seeking a higher object. Love was  
given,

Encouraged, sanctioned, chiefly for that  
end;

For this the passion to excess was  
driven —

That self might be annulled: her bond-  
age prove

The fetters of a dream, opposed to  
love." —

Aloud she shrieked! for Hermes reap-  
pears!

Round the dear Shade she would have  
clung — 'tis vain:

The hours are past — too brief had they  
been years;



And him no mortal effort can detain :  
 Swift, toward the realms that know not  
   earthly day,  
 He through the portal takes his silent  
   way,  
 And on the palace-floor a lifeless corse she  
   lay.

Thus, all in vain exhorted and reproved,  
 She perished; and, as for a wilful crime,  
 By the just Gods whom no weak pity  
   moved,  
 Was doomed to wear out her appointed  
   time,  
 Apart from happy Ghosts, that gather  
   flowers  
 Of blissful quiet 'mid unfading bowers.

— Yet tears to human suffering are due;  
 And mortal hopes defeated and o'er-  
   thrown  
 Are mourned by man, and not by man  
   alone,  
 As fondly he believes. — Upon the side  
 Of Hellespont (such faith was enter-  
   tained)  
 A knot of spiry trees for ages grew  
 From out of the tomb of him for whom she  
   died;  
 And ever, when such stature they had  
   gained  
 That Ilium's walls were subject to their  
   view,  
 The trees' tall summits withered at the  
   sight:  
 A constant interchange of growth and  
   blight!                    1814. 1815.

### YARROW VISITED

SEPTEMBER 1814

As mentioned in my verses on the death of the Ettrick Shepherd, my first visit to Yarrow was in his company. We had lodged the night before at Traquhair, where Hogg had joined us . . . I seldom read or think of this poem without regretting that my dear Sister was not of the party, as she would have had so much delight in recalling the time when, travelling together in Scotland, we declined going in search of this celebrated stream, not altogether, I will frankly confess, for the reasons assigned in the poem on the occasion. (*Wordsworth.*)

And is this — Yarrow! — *This* the Stream  
 Of which my fancy cherished,  
 So faithfully, a waking dream?  
 An image that hath perished!

O that some Minstrel's harp were near,  
 To utter notes of gladness,  
 And chase this silence from the air,  
 That fills my heart with sadness!

Yet why? — a silvery current flows  
 With uncontrolled meanderings;  
 Nor have these eyes by greener hills  
 Been soothed, in all my wanderings.  
 And, through her depths, Saint Mary's  
   Lake  
 Is visibly delighted;  
 For not a feature of those hills  
 Is in the mirror slighted.

A blue sky bends o'er Yarrow vale,  
 Save where that pearly whiteness  
 Is round the rising sun diffused,  
 A tender hazy brightness;  
 Mild dawn of promise! that excludes  
 All profitless dejection;  
 Though not unwilling here to admit  
 A pensive recollection.

Where was it that the famous Flower  
 Of Yarrow Vale lay bleeding?  
 His bed perchance was yon smooth  
   mound  
 On which the herd is feeding:  
 And haply from this crystal pool,  
 Now peaceful as the morning,  
 The Water-wraith ascended thrice —  
 And gave his doleful warning.

Delicious is the Lay that sings  
 The haunts of happy Lovers,  
 The path that leads them to the grove,  
 The leafy grove that covers:  
 And Pity sanctifies the Verse  
 That paints, by strength of sorrow,  
 The unconquerable strength of love;  
 Bear witness, rueful Yarrow!

But thou, that didst appear so fair  
 To fond imagination,  
 Dost rival in the light of day  
 Her delicate creation:  
 Meek loveliness is round thee spread,  
 A softness still and holy;  
 The grace of forest charms decayed,  
 And pastoral melancholy.

That region left, the vale unfolds  
 Rich groves of lofty stature,  
 With Yarrow winding through the pomp  
 Of cultivated nature;

And, rising from those lofty groves,  
Behold a Ruin hoary!  
The shattered front of Newark's Towers,  
Renowned in Border story.

Fair scenes for childhood's opening bloom,  
For sportive youth to stray in;  
For manhood to enjoy his strength;  
And age to wear away in!  
Yon cottage seems a bower of bliss,  
A covert for protection  
Of tender thoughts, that nestle there —  
The brood of chaste affection.

How sweet, on this autumnal day,  
The wild-wood fruits to gather,  
And on my True-love's forehead plant  
A crest of blooming heather!  
And what if I enwreathed my own!  
'Twere no offence to reason;  
The sober Hills thus deck their brows  
To meet the wintry season.

I see — but not by sight alone,  
Loved Yarrow, have I won thee;  
A ray of fancy still survives —  
Her sunshine plays upon thee!  
Thy ever-youthful waters keep  
A course of lively pleasure;  
And gladsome notes my lips can breathe,  
Accordant to the measure.

The vapors linger round the Heights,  
They melt, and soon must vanish;  
One hour is theirs, nor more is mine —  
Sad thought, which I would banish,  
But that I know, where'er I go,  
Thy genuine image, Yarrow!  
Will dwell with me — to heighten joy,  
And cheer my mind in sorrow.

1814. 1815.

#### TO B. R. HAYDON

B. R. Haydon, the painter, was for many years a friend of Wordsworth. On November 27, 1815, Haydon wrote: "I have benefited and have been supported in the troubles of life by your poetry. . . . I will bear want, pain, misery, and blindness; but I will never yield one step I have gained on the road I am determined to travel over." Wordsworth's answer to this letter was the following sonnet.

HIGH is our calling, Friend — Creative Art!  
(Whether the instrument of words she use,  
Or pencil pregnant with ethereal hues.)  
Demands the service of a mind and heart,

Though sensitive, yet, in their weakest  
part,  
Heroically fashioned — to infuse  
Faith in the whispers of the lonely Muse,  
While the whole world seems adverse to  
desert.  
And, oh! when Nature sinks, as oft she  
may,  
Through long-lived pressure of obscure  
distress,  
Still to be strenuous for the bright re-  
ward,  
And in the soul admit of no decay,  
Brook no continuance of weak-minded-  
ness —  
Great is the glory, for the strife is hard!  
1815. 1816.

#### NOVEMBER 1

How clear, how keen, how marvellously  
bright  
The effluence from yon distant mountain's  
head,  
Which, strewn with snow smooth as the  
sky can shed,  
Shines like another sun — on mortal sight  
Uprisen, as if to check approaching  
Night,  
And all her twinkling stars. Who now  
would tread,  
If so he might, yon mountain's glittering  
head —  
Terrestrial, but a surface, by the flight  
Of sad mortality's earth-sullyng wing,  
Unswep, unstained? Nor shall the  
aërial Powers  
Dissolve that beauty, destined to endure,  
White, radiant, spotless, exquisitely pure,  
Through all vicissitudes, till genial  
Spring  
Has filled the laughing vales with wel-  
come flowers. 1815. 1816.

#### SURPRISED BY JOY — IMPATIENT AS THE WIND

This was in fact suggested by my daughter Catherine long after her death. (*Wordsworth.*)

SURPRISED by joy — impatient as the  
Wind  
I turned to share the transport — Oh!  
with whom  
But Thee, deep buried in the silent tomb,

That spot which no vicissitude can find?  
Love, faithful love, recalled thee to my  
mind —

But how could I forget thee? Through  
what power,

Even for the least division of an hour,  
Have I been so beguiled as to be blind  
To my most grievous loss? — That  
thought's return

Was the worst pang that sorrow ever bore,  
Save one, one only, when I stood forlorn,  
Knowing my heart's best treasure was  
no more;

That neither present time, nor years un-  
born

Could to my sight that heavenly face  
restore. 1815? 1815.

### HAST THOU SEEN, WITH FLASH INCESSANT

HAST thou seen, with flash incessant,  
Bubbles gliding under ice,  
Bodied forth and evanescent,  
No one knows by what device?

Such are thoughts! — A wind-swept  
meadow

Mimicking a troubled sea,  
Such is life; and death a shadow  
From the rock eternity! 1818. 1820.

### NEAR THE SPRING OF THE HERMITAGE

TROUBLED long with warring notions,  
Long impatient of thy rod,  
I resign my soul's emotions  
Unto Thee, mysterious God!

What avails the kindly shelter  
Yielded by this craggy rent,  
If my spirit toss and welter  
On the waves of discontent?

Parching Summer hath no warrant  
To consume this crystal Well;  
Rains, that make each rill a torrent,  
Neither sully it nor swell.

Thus, dishonouring not her station,  
Would my Life present to Thee,  
Gracious God, the pure oblation  
Of divine tranquillity! 1818. 1820.

### NOT SELDOM, CLAD IN RADIANT VEST

NOT seldom, clad in radiant vest,  
Deceitfully goes forth the Morn;  
Not seldom Evening in the west  
Sinks smilingly forsworn.

The smoothest seas will sometimes prove,  
To the confiding Bark, untrue;  
And, if she trust the stars above,  
They can be treacherous too.

The umbrageous Oak, in pomp outspread  
Full oft, when storms the welkin rend,  
Draws lightning down upon the head  
It promised to defend.

But Thou art true, incarnate Lord,  
Who didst vouchsafe for man to die;  
Thy smile is sure, thy plighted word  
No change can falsify!

I bent before thy gracious throne,  
And asked for peace on suppliant knee;  
And peace was given, — nor peace alone,  
But faith sublimed to ecstasy!  
1818. 1820.

### COMPOSED UPON AN EVENING OF EXTRAORDINARY SPLENDOR AND BEAUTY

#### I

HAD this effulgence disappeared  
With flying haste, I might have sent,  
Among the speechless clouds, a look  
Of blank astonishment;  
But 'tis endued with power to stay,  
And sanctify one closing day,  
That frail Mortality may see —  
What is? — ah no, but what *can* be!  
Time was when field and watery cove  
With modulated echoes rang,  
While choirs of fervent Angels sang  
Their vespers in the grove;  
Or, crowning, star-like, each some  
sovereign height,  
Warbled, for heaven above and earth  
below,  
Strains suitable to both. — Such holy rite,  
Methinks, if audibly repeated now  
From hill or valley, could not move  
Sublimier transport, purer love,  
Than doth this silent spectacle — the  
gleam —  
The shadow — and the peace supreme!

## II

No sound is uttered, — but a deep  
 And solemn harmony pervades  
 The hollow vale from steep to steep,  
 And penetrates the glades.  
 Far-distant images draw nigh,  
 Called forth by wondrous potency  
 Of beamy radiance, that imbues,  
 Whate'er it strikes, with gem-like hues !  
 In vision exquisitely clear,  
 Herds range along the mountain side ;  
 And glistening antlers are descried ;  
 And gilded flocks appear.  
 Thine is the tranquil hour, purpureal  
     Eve !  
 But long as god-like wish, or hope divine,  
 Informs my spirit, ne'er can I believe  
 That this magnificence is wholly thine !  
 — From worlds not quickened by the sun  
 A portion of the gift is won ;  
 An intermingling of Heaven's pomp is  
     spread  
 On ground which British shepherds  
     tread !

## III

And, if there be whom broken ties  
 Afflict, or injuries assail,  
 Yon hazy ridges to their eyes  
 Present a glorious scale,  
 Climbing suffused with sunny air,  
 To stop — no record hath told where !  
 And tempting Fancy to ascend,  
 And with immortal Spirits blend !  
 — Wings at my shoulders seem to play ;  
 But, rooted here, I stand and gaze  
 On those bright steps that heavenward  
     raise  
 Their practicable way.  
 Come forth, ye drooping old men, look  
     abroad,  
 And see to what fair countries ye are  
     bound !  
 And if some traveller, weary of his road,  
 Hath slept since noontide on the grassy  
     ground,  
 Ye Genii ! to his covert speed ;  
 And wake him with such gentle heed  
 As may attune his soul to meet the dower  
 Bestowed on this transcendent hour !

## IV

Such hues from their celestial Urn  
 Were wont to stream before mine eye,  
 Where'er it w ndered in the morn  
 Of blissful infancy.

This glimpse of glory, why renewed ?  
 Nay, rather speak with gratitude ;  
 For, if a vestige of those gleams  
 Survived, 'twas only in my dreams.  
 Dread Power ! whom peace and calm-  
     ness serve

No less than Nature's threatening voice,  
 If aught unworthy be my choice,  
 From THEE if I would swerve ;  
 Oh, let thy grace remind me of the light  
 Full early lost, and fruitlessly deplored ;  
 Which, at this moment, on my waking  
     sight

Appears to shine, by miracle restored ;  
 My soul, though yet confined to earth,  
 Rejoices in a second birth !  
 — 'Tis past, the visionary splendour  
     fades ;

And night approaches with her shades.  
1818. 1820.

## TO A SNOWDROP

LONE Flower, hemmed in with snows and  
     white as they  
 But hardier far, once more I see thee bend  
 Thy forehead, as if fearful to offend,  
 Like an unbidden guest. Though day by  
     day,  
 Storms, sallying from the mountain-tops,  
     waylay  
 The rising sun, and on the plains descend ;  
 Yet art thou welcome, welcome as a friend  
 Whose zeal outruns his promise ! Blue-  
     eyed May  
 Shall soon behold this border thickly set  
 With bright jonquils, their odours lavish-  
     ing  
 On the soft west-wind and his frolic peers ;  
 Nor will I then thy modest grace forget,  
 Chaste Snowdrop, venturous harbinger of  
     Spring,  
 And pensive monitor of fleeting years !  
1819. 1819.

## SEPTEMBER 1819

THE sylvan slopes with corn-clad fields  
 Are hung, as if with golden shields,  
 Bright trophies of the sun !  
 Like a fair sister of the sky,  
 Unruffled doth the blue lake lie,  
 The mountains looking on.

And, sooth to say, yon vocal grove,  
Albeit uninspired by love,  
By love untaught to ring,  
May well afford to mortal ear  
An impulse more profoundly dear  
Than music of the Spring.

For *that* from turbulence and heat  
Proceeds, from some uneasy seat  
In nature's struggling frame,  
Some region of impatient life :  
And jealousy, and quivering strife,  
Therein a portion claim.

This, this is holy ; — while I hear  
These vespers of another year,  
This hymn of thanks and praise,  
My spirit seems to mount above  
The anxieties of human love,  
And earth's precarious days.

But list ! — though winter storms be nigh,  
Unchecked is that soft harmony :  
There lives Who can provide  
For all his creatures ; and in Him,  
Even like the radiant Seraphim,  
These choristers confide.

#### UPON THE SAME OCCASION

DEPARTING summer hath assumed  
An aspect tenderly illumed,  
The gentlest look of spring ;  
That calls from yonder leafy shade  
Unfaded, yet prepared to fade,  
A timely carolling.

No faint and hesitating trill,  
Such tribute as to winter chill  
The lonely redbreast pays !  
Clear, loud, and lively is the din,  
From social warblers gathering in  
Their harvest of sweet lays.

Nor doth the example fail to cheer  
Me, conscious that my leaf is sere,  
And yellow on the bough : —  
Fall, rosy garlands, from my head !  
Ye myrtle wreaths, your fragrance shed  
Around a younger brow !

Yet will I temperately rejoice ;  
Wide is the range, and free the choice  
Of undiscordant themes ;

Which, haply, kindred souls may prize  
Not less than vernal ecstasies,  
And passion's feverish dreams.

For deathless powers to verse belong,  
And they like Demi-gods are strong  
On whom the Muses smile ;  
But some their function have disclaimed,  
Best pleased with what is aptliest framed  
To enervate and defile.

Not such the initiatory strains  
Committed to the silent plains  
In Britain's earliest dawn :  
Trembled the groves, the stars grew pale,  
While all-too-daringly the veil  
Of nature was withdrawn !

Nor such the spirit-stirring note  
When the live chords Alcæus smote,  
Inflamed by sense of wrong ;  
Woe ! woe to Tyrants ! from the lyre  
Broke threateningly, in sparkles dire  
Of fierce vindictive song.

And not unhallowed was the page  
By wingèd Love inscribed, to assuage  
The pangs of vain pursuit ;  
Love listening while the Lesbian Maid  
With finest touch of passion swayed  
Her own Æolian lute.

O ye, who patiently explore  
The wreck of Herculean lore,  
What rapture ! could ye seize  
Some Theban fragment, or unroll  
One precious, tender-hearted, scroll  
Of pure Simonides.

That were, indeed, a genuine birth  
Of poesy ; a bursting forth  
Of genius from the dust :  
What Horace gloried to behold,  
What Maro loved, shall we enfold ?  
Can haughty Time be just !

1819. 1820.

#### AFTER-THOUGHT

I THOUGHT of Thee, my partner and my  
guide,  
As being past away. — Vain sympathies !  
For, backward, Duddon, as I cast my  
eyes,  
I see what was, and is, and will abide ;



Still glides the Stream, and shall for ever  
 glide;  
 The Form remains, the Function never  
 dies;  
 While we, the brave, the mighty, and the  
 wise,  
 We Men, who in our morn of youth de-  
 fied  
 The elements, must vanish; — be it so!  
 Enough, if something from our hands  
 have power  
 To live, and act, and serve the future  
 hour;  
 And if, as toward the silent tomb we go,  
 Through love, through hope, and faith's  
 transcendent dower,  
 We feel that we are greater than we know.  
*1820. 1820.*

#### COMPOSED IN ONE OF THE CATHOLIC CANTONS

DOOMED as we are our native dust  
 To wet with many a bitter shower,  
 It ill befits us to disdain  
 The altar, to deride the fane,  
 Where simple Sufferers bend, in trust  
 To win a happier hour.

I love, where spreads the village lawn,  
 Upon some knee-worn cell to gaze:  
 Hail to the firm unmoving cross,  
 Aloft, where pines their branches toss!  
 And to the chapel far withdrawn,  
 That lurks by lonely ways!

Where'er we roam — along the brink  
 Of Rhine — or by the sweeping Po,  
 Through Alpine vale, or champain wide,  
 Whate'er we look on, at our side  
 Be Charity! — to bid us think,  
 And feel, if we would know.  
*1820. 1822.*

#### MUTABILITY

FROM low to high doth dissolution climb,  
 And sink from high to low, along a scale  
 Of awful notes, whose concord shall not  
 fail;  
 A musical but melancholy chime,  
 Which they can hear who meddle not  
 with crime.  
 Nor avarice, nor over-anxious care.

Truth fails not; but her outward forms  
 that bear  
 The longest date do melt like frosty rime,  
 That in the morning whitened hill and  
 plain  
 And is no more; drop like the tower  
 sublime  
 Of yesterday, which royally did wear  
 His crown of weeds, but could not even  
 sustain  
 Some casual shout that broke the silent  
 air,  
 Or the unimaginable touch of Time.  
*1821. 1822.*

#### INSIDE OF KING'S COLLEGE CHAPEL, CAMBRIDGE

Tax not the royal Saint with vain ex-  
 pense,  
 With ill-matched aims the Architect who  
 planned —  
 Albeit laboring for a scanty band  
 Of white-robed Scholars only — this im-  
 mense  
 And glorious Work of fine intelligence!  
 Give all thou canst; high Heaven re-  
 jects the lore  
 Of nicely-calculated less or more;  
 So deemed the man who fashioned for the  
 sense  
 These lofty pillars, spread that branch-  
 ing roof  
 Self-poised, and scooped into ten thou-  
 sand cells,  
 Where light and shade repose, where  
 music dwells  
 Linger — and wandering on as loth to  
 die;  
 Like thoughts whose very sweetness  
 yieldeth proof  
 That they were born for immortality.  
*1820 or 1821. 1822.*

#### MEMORY

A PEN — to register; a key —  
 That winds through secret wards;  
 Are well assigned to Memory  
 By allegoric Bards.

As aptly, also, might be given  
 A Pencil to her hand;  
 That, softening objects, sometimes even  
 Outstrips the heart's demand;

That smooths forgone distress, the lines  
Of lingering care subdues,  
Long-vanished happiness refines,  
And clothes in brighter hues;

Yet, like a tool of Fancy, works  
Those Spectres to dilate  
That startle Conscience, as she lurks  
Within her lonely seat.

Oh! that our lives, which flee so fast,  
In purity were such,  
That not an image of the past  
Should fear that pencil's touch!

Retirement then might hourly look  
Upon a soothing scene,  
Age steal to his allotted nook  
Contented and serene;

With heart as calm as lakes that sleep,  
In frosty moonlight glistening;  
Or mountain rivers, where they creep  
Along a channel smooth and deep,  
To their own far-off murmurs listening.

1823. 1827.

### TO A SKY-LARK

ETHEREAL minstrel! pilgrim of the sky!  
Dost thou despise the earth where cares  
abound?

Or, while the wings aspire, are heart and  
eye

Both with thy nest upon the dewy  
ground?

Thy nest which thou canst drop into at  
will,

Those quivering wings composed, that  
music still!

Leave to the nightingale her shady wood;  
A privacy of glorious light is thine;  
Whence thou dost pour upon the world  
a flood

Of harmony, with instinct more divine;  
Type of the wise who soar, but never roam;  
True to the kindred points of Heaven  
and Home!

1825. 1827.

### SCORN NOT THE SONNET

Composed, almost extempore, in a short walk on  
the western side of Rydal Lake. (*Wordsworth.*)

SCORN not the Sonnet; Critic, you have  
frowned,

Mindless of its just honors; with this  
key

Shakspeare unlocked his heart; the  
melody

Of this small lute gave ease to Petrarch's  
wound;

A thousand times this pipe did Tasso  
sound;

With it Camoëns soothed an exile's grief;  
The Sonnet glittered a gay myrtle leaf  
Amid the cypress with which Dante  
crowned

His visionary brow: a glow-worm lamp,  
It cheered mild Spenser, called from  
Faeryland

To struggle through dark ways; and,  
when a damp

Fell round the path of Milton, in his  
hand

The Thing became a trumpet; whence  
he blew

Soul-animating strains — alas, too few!  
1827? 1827.

### THE PRIMROSE OF THE ROCK

Written at Rydal Mount. The Rock stands on  
the right hand a little way leading up the middle  
road from Rydal to Grasmere. We have been in  
the habit of calling it the glow-worm rock from the  
number of glow-worms we have often seen hanging  
on it as described. The tuft of primrose has, I fear,  
been washed away by the heavy rains. (*Words-  
worth.*)

See Dorothy Wordsworth's *Journal*, April 24th,  
1802.

A ROCK there is whose homely front  
The passing traveller slights;

Yet there the glow-worms hang their  
lamps,

Like stars, at various heights;  
And one coy Primrose to that Rock  
The vernal breeze invites.

What hideous warfare hath been waged,  
What kingdoms overthrown,  
Since first I spied that Primrose-tuft  
And marked it for my own;  
A lasting link in Nature's chain  
From highest heaven let down!

The flowers, still faithful to the stems,  
Their fellowship renew;

The stems are faithful to the root,  
That worketh out of view;

And to the rock the root adheres  
In every fibre true.

Close clings to earth the living rock,  
 Though threatening still to fall;  
 The earth is constant to her sphere;  
 And God upholds them all:  
 So blooms this lonely Plant, nor dreads  
 Her annual funeral.

\* \* \* \*

Here closed the meditative strain;  
 But air breathed soft that day,  
 The hoary mountain-heights were cheered,  
 The sunny vale looked gay;  
 And to the Primrose of the Rock  
 I gave this after-lay.

I sang — Let myriads of bright flowers,  
 Like Thee, in field and grove  
 Revive unenvied; — mightier far,  
 Than tremblings that reprove  
 Our vernal tendencies to hope,  
 Is God's redeeming love;

That love which changed — for wan dis-  
 ease,  
 For sorrow that had bent  
 O'er hopeless dust, for withered age —  
 Their moral element,  
 And turned the thistles of a curse  
 To types beneficent.

Sin-blighted though we are, we too,  
 The reasoning Sons of Men,  
 From one oblivious winter called  
 Shall rise, and breathe again:  
 And in eternal summer lose  
 Our threescore years and ten.

To humbleness of heart descends  
 This prescience from on high,  
 The faith that elevates the just,  
 Before and when they die;  
 And makes each soul a separate heaven,  
 A court for Deity. 1831. 1835.

### YARROW REVISITED

The following Stanzas are a memorial of a day passed with Sir Walter Scott and other Friends visiting the Banks of the Yarrow under his guidance, immediately before his departure from Abbotsford, for Naples.

The title *Yarrow Revisited* will stand in no need of explanation for Readers acquainted with the Author's previous poems suggested by that celebrated Stream. (*Wordsworth.*)

THE gallant Youth, who may have  
 gained,  
 Or seeks, a "winsome Marrow,"

Was but an Infant in the lap  
 When first I looked on Yarrow;  
 Once more, by Newark's Castle-gate  
 Long left without a warder,  
 I stood, looked, listened, and with Thee,  
 Great Minstrel of the Border!

Grave thoughts ruled wide on that sweet  
 day,  
 Their dignity installing  
 In gentle bosoms, while sere leaves  
 Were on the bough, or falling;  
 But breezes played, and sunshine  
 gleamed —  
 The forest to embolden;  
 Reddened the fiery hues and shot  
 Transparence through the golden.

For busy thoughts the Stream flowed on  
 In foamy agitation;  
 And slept in many a crystal pool  
 For quiet contemplation:  
 No public and no private care  
 The freeborn mind enthralling,  
 We made a day of happy hours,  
 Our happy days recalling.

Brisk Youth appeared, the Morn of  
 youth,  
 With freaks of graceful folly, —  
 Life's temperate Noon, her sober Eve,  
 Her Night not melancholy;  
 Past, present, future, all appeared  
 In harmony united,  
 Like guests that meet, and some from  
 far,  
 By cordial love invited.

And if, as Yarrow, through the woods  
 And down the meadow ranging,  
 Did meet us with unaltered face,  
 Though we were changed and chang-  
 ing;  
 If, *then*, some natural shadows spread  
 Our inward prospect over,  
 The soul's deep valley was not slow  
 Its brightness to recover.

Eternal blessings on the Muse,  
 And her divine employment!  
 The blameless Muse, who trains her Sons  
 For hope and calm enjoyment;  
 Albeit sickness, lingering yet,  
 Has o'er their pillow brooded;  
 And Care waylays their steps — a Sprite  
 Not easily eluded.

For thee, O SCOTT! compelled to change  
 Green Eildon-hill and Cheviot  
 For warm Vesuvio's vine-clad slopes;  
 And leave thy Tweed and Tiviot  
 For mild Sorrento's breezy waves;  
 May classic Fancy, linking  
 With native Fancy her fresh aid,  
 Preserve thy heart from sinking!

Oh! while they minister to thee,  
 Each vying with the other,  
 May Health return to mellow Age  
 With Strength, her venturous brother;  
 And Tiber, and each brook and rill  
 Renowned in song and story,  
 With unimagined beauty shine,  
 Nor lose one ray of glory!

For Thou, upon a hundred streams,  
 By tales of love and sorrow  
 Of faithful love, undaunted truth,  
 Hast shed the power of Yarrow;  
 And streams unknown, hills yet unseen,  
 Wherever they invite Thee,  
 At parent Nature's grateful call,  
 With gladness must requite Thee.

A gracious welcome shall be thine,  
 Such looks of love and honor  
 As thy own Yarrow gave to me  
 When first I gazed upon her;  
 Beheld what I had feared to see,  
 Unwilling to surrender  
 Dreams treasured up from early days,  
 The holy and the tender.

And what, for this frail world, were all  
 That mortals do or suffer,  
 Did no responsive harp, no pen,  
 Memorial tribute offer?  
 Yea, what were mighty Nature's self?  
 Her features, could they win us,  
 Unhelped by the poetic voice  
 That hourly speaks within us?

Nor deem that localized Romance  
 Plays false with our affections;  
 Unsanctifies our tears — made sport  
 For fanciful dejections:  
 Ah, no! the visions of the past  
 Sustain the heart in feeling  
 Life as she is — our changeful Life,  
 With friends and kindred dealing.

Bear witness, Ye, whose thoughts that day  
 In Yarrow's groves were centred;

Who through the silent portal arch  
 Of mouldering Newark entered;  
 And clomb the winding stair that once  
 Too timidly was mounted  
 By the "last Minstrel," (not the last!)  
 Ere he his Tale recounted.

Flow on for ever, Yarrow Stream!  
 Fulfil thy pensive duty,  
 Well pleased that future Bards should  
 chant  
 For simple hearts thy beauty;  
 To dream-light dear while yet unseen,  
 Dear to the common sunshine,  
 And dearer still, as now I feel,  
 To memory's shadowy moonshine:  
 1831. 1835.

### THE TROSACHS

As recorded in my sister's Journal, I had first seen the Trosachs in her and Coleridge's company. The sentiment that runs through this Sonnet was natural to the season in which I again saw this beautiful spot; but this and some other sonnets that follow were colored by the remembrance of my recent visit to Sir Walter Scott, and the melancholy errand on which he was going. (*Wordsworth.*)

THERE'S not a nook within this solemn  
 Pass,  
 But were an apt confessional for One  
 Taught by his summer spent, his autumn  
 gone,  
 That Life is but a tale of morning grass  
 Withered at eve. From scenes of art  
 which chase  
 That thought away, turn, and with  
 watchful eyes  
 Feed it 'mid Nature's old felicities,  
 Rocks, rivers, and smooth lakes more  
 clear than glass  
 Untouched, unbreathed upon. Thrice  
 happy quest,  
 If from a golden perch of aspen spray  
 (October's workmanship to rival May)  
 The pensive warbler of the ruddy breast  
 That moral sweeten by a heaven-taught  
 lay,  
 Lulling the year, with all its cares, to  
 rest!  
 1831. 1835.

### IF THOU INDEED DERIVE THY LIGHT FROM HEAVEN

If thou indeed derive thy light from  
 Heaven,

Then, to the measure of that heaven-born light,  
 Shine, Poet! in thy place, and be content:  
 The stars pre-eminent in magnitude,  
 And they that from the zenith dart their beams,  
 (Visible though they be to half the earth,  
 Though half a sphere be conscious of their brightness)  
 Are yet of no diviner origin,  
 No purer essence, than the one that burns,  
 Like an untended watch-fire on the ridge  
 Of some dark mountain; or than those which seem  
 Humbly to hang, like twinkling winter lamps,  
 Among the branches of the leafless trees.  
 All are the undying offspring of one Sire:  
 Then, to the measure of the light vouchsafed,  
 Shine, Poet! in thy place, and be content.  
 1832. 1836.

#### IF THIS GREAT WORLD OF JOY AND PAIN

If this great world of joy and pain  
 Revolve in one sure track;  
 If freedom, set, will rise again,  
 And virtue, flown, come back;  
 Woe to the purblind crew who fill  
 The heart with each day's care;  
 Nor gain, from past or future skill  
 To bear, and to forbear!  
 1833. 1835.

#### "THERE!" SAID A STRIPLING, POINTING WITH MEET PRIDE

"THERE!" said a Stripling, pointing with meet pride  
 Towards a low roof with green trees half concealed,  
 "Is Mosgiel Farm; and that's the very field  
 Where Burns ploughed up the Daisy."  
 Far and wide  
 A plain below stretched seaward, while, descried  
 Above sea-clouds, the Peaks of Arran rose;  
 And, by that simple notice, the repose  
 Of earth, sky, sea, and air, was vivified.

Beneath "the random *biel'd* of clod or stone"  
 Myriads of daisies have shone forth in flower  
 Near the lark's nest, and in their natural hour  
 Have passed away; less happy than the One  
 That, by the unwilling ploughshare, died to prove  
 The tender charm of poetry and love.  
 1833. 1835.

#### MOST SWEET IT IS WITH UNUPLIFTED EYES

Most sweet it is with unuplifted eyes  
 To pace the ground, if path be there or none,  
 While a fair region round the traveller lies  
 Which he forbears again to look upon;  
 Pleased rather with some soft ideal scene,  
 The work of Fancy, or some happy tone  
 Of meditation, slipping in between  
 The beauty coming and the beauty gone.  
 If Thought and Love desert us, from that day  
 Let us break off all commerce with the Muse:  
 With Thought and Love companions of our way,  
 Whate'er the senses take or may refuse,  
 The Mind's internal heaven shall shed her dew  
 Of inspiration on the humblest lay.  
 1833. 1835.

#### EXTEMPORE EFFUSION UPON THE DEATH OF JAMES HOGG<sup>1</sup>

WHEN first, descending from the moor-lands,  
 I saw the Stream of Yarrow glide  
 Along a bare and open valley,  
 The Ettrick Shepherd was my guide.  
 When last along its banks I wandered  
 Through groves that had begun to shed  
 Their golden leaves upon the pathways,  
 My steps the Border-minstrel led.

<sup>1</sup> Walter Scott . . . . . died Sept. 21, 1832  
 S. T. Coleridge . . . . . " July 25, 1834  
 Charles Lamb . . . . . " Dec. 27, 1834  
 George Crabbe . . . . . " Feb. 3, 1832  
 Felicia Hemans . . . . . " May 16, 1834



The mighty Minstrel breathes no longer,  
'Mid mouldering ruins low he lies;  
And death upon the braes of Yarrow,  
Has closed the Shepherd-poet's eyes:

Nor has the rolling year twice measured,  
From sign to sign, its steadfast course,  
Since every mortal power of Coleridge  
Was frozen at its marvellous source;

The rapt One, of the godlike forehead,  
The heaven-eyed creature sleeps in earth.  
And Lamb, the frolic and the gentle,  
Has vanished from his lonely hearth.

Like clouds that rake the mountain-  
summits,  
Or waves that own no curbing hand,  
How fast has brother followed brother  
From sunshine to the sunless land!

Yet I, whose lids from infant slumber  
Were earlier raised, remain to hear  
A timid voice, that asks in whispers,  
"Who next will drop and disappear?"

Our haughty life is crowned with dark-  
ness,  
Like London with its own black wreath,  
On which with thee, O Crabbe! forth-  
looking,  
I gazed from Hampstead's breezy heath.

As if but yesterday departed,  
Thou too art gone before; but why,  
O'er ripe fruit, seasonably gathered,  
Should frail survivors heave a sigh?

Mourn rather for that holy Spirit,  
Sweet as the spring, as ocean deep;  
For Her who, ere her summer faded,  
Has sunk into a breathless sleep.

No more of old romantic sorrows,  
For slaughtered Youth or love-lorn Maid!  
With sharper grief is Yarrow smitten,  
And Ettrick mourns with her their Poet  
dead.

*November 1835. December 1835.*

### A POET!—HE HATH PUT HIS HEART TO SCHOOL

*A Poet!*—He hath put his heart to  
school,  
Nor dares to move unpropped upon the  
staff

Which Art hath lodged within his hand  
— must laugh

By precept only, and shed tears by  
rule.

Thy Art be Nature; the live current  
quaff,

And let the groveller sip his stagnant  
pool,

In fear that else, when Critics grave and  
cool

Have killed him, Scorn should write his  
epitaph.

How does the Meadow-flower its bloom  
unfold?

Because the lovely little flower is free  
Down to its root, and, in that freedom,  
bold;

And so the grandeur of the Forest-tree  
Comes not by casting in a formal mould,  
But from its *own* divine vitality.

*1842? 1842.*

### SO FAIR, SO SWEET, WITHAL SO SENSITIVE

So fair, so sweet, withal so sensitive,  
Would that the little Flowers were born  
to live,  
Conscious of half the pleasure which  
they give;

That to this mountain-daisy's self were  
known

The beauty of its star-shaped shadow,  
thrown

On the smooth surface of this naked  
stone!

And what if hence a bold desire should  
mount

High as the Sun, that he could take  
account

Of all that issues from his glorious fount!

So might he ken how by his sovereign aid  
These delicate companionships are made;  
And how he rules the pomp of light and  
shade;

And were the Sister-power that shines  
by night

So privileged, what a countenance of  
delight

Would through the clouds break forth  
on human sight!

Fond fancies! wheresoe'er shall turn  
     thine eye  
 On earth, air, ocean, or the starry sky,  
 Converse with Nature in pure sympathy;

All vain desires, all lawless wishes quelled,  
 Be Thou to love and praise alike impelled  
 Whatever boon is granted or withheld.

1844. 1845.

### THE UNREMITTING VOICE OF NIGHTLY STREAMS

THE unremitting voice of nightly streams  
 That wastes so oft, we think, its tuneful  
     powers,  
 If neither soothing to the worm that  
     gleams  
 Through dewy grass, nor small birds  
     hushed in bowers,  
 Nor unto silent leaves and drowsy  
     flowers, —  
 That voice of unpretending harmony  
 (For who what is shall measure by what  
     seems  
 To be, or not to be,  
 Or tax high Heaven with prodigality?)  
 Wants not a healing influence that can  
     creep  
 Into the human breast, and mix with  
     sleep  
 To regulate the motion of our dreams  
 For kindly issues — as through every  
     clime

Was felt near murmuring brooks in  
     earliest time;  
 As at this day, the rudest swains who  
     dwell  
 Where torrents roar, or hear the tinkling  
     knell  
 Of water-breaks, with grateful heart  
     could tell. 1846. 1850.

### SONNET

TO AN OCTOGENARIAN

AFFECTIONS lose their object; Time  
     brings forth  
 No successors; and, lodged in memory,  
 If love exist no longer, it must die, —  
 Wanting accustomed food, must pass  
     from earth,  
 Or never hope to reach a second birth.  
 This sad belief, the happiest that is left  
 To thousands, share not Thou; howe'er  
     bereft,  
 Scorned, or neglected, fear not such a  
     dearth.  
 Though poor and destitute of friends  
     thou art,  
 Perhaps the sole survivor of thy race,  
 One to whom Heaven assigns that mourn-  
     ful part  
 The utmost solitude of age to face,  
 Still shall be left some corner of the heart  
 Where Love for living Thing can find a  
     place. 1846. 1850.

# COLERIDGE

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## COLERIDGE

### LIFE

As late I journey'd o'er the extensive  
 plain  
 Where native Otter sports his scanty  
 stream,  
 Musing in torpid woe a sister's pain,  
 The glorious prospect woke me from  
 the dream.

At every step it widen'd to my sight,  
 Wood, Meadow, verdant Hill, and dreary  
 Steep,  
 Following in quick succession of delight,  
 Till all — at once — did my eye ravish'd  
 sweep!

May this (I cried) my course through  
 Life portray!  
 New scenes of wisdom may each step  
 display,  
 And knowledge open as my days ad-  
 vance!

Till what time Death shall pour the un-  
 darken'd ray,  
 My eye shall dart thro' infinite expanse,  
 And thought suspended lie in rapture's  
 blissful trance.

*September 1789. 1834.<sup>1</sup>*

### LINES

#### ON AN AUTUMNAL EVENING

O THOU wild Fancy, check thy wing! No  
 more  
 Those thin white flakes, those purple  
 clouds explore!  
 Nor there with happy spirits speed thy  
 flight  
 Bathed in rich amber-glowing floods of  
 light;

<sup>1</sup> The dates for Coleridge's poems are made up from the Shepherd-Prideaux and the Haney bibliographies, and from the excellent notes to Campbell's edition of the *Poetical Works*.

Nor in yon gleam, where slow descends  
 the day,  
 With western peasants hail the morning  
 ray!  
 Ah! rather bid the perished pleasures  
 move,  
 A shadowy train, across the soul of Love!  
 O'er disappointment's wintry desert fling  
 Each flower that wreathed the dewy locks  
 of Spring,  
 When blushing, like a bride, from Hope's  
 trim bower  
 She leapt, awakened by the pattering  
 shower.  
 Now sheds the sinking Sun a deeper  
 gleam,  
 Aid, lovely Sorceress! aid thy Poet's  
 dream!  
 With faery wand O bid the Maid arise,  
 Chaste Joyance dancing in her bright-  
 blue eyes;  
 As erst when from the Muses' calm abode  
 I came, with Learning's meed not un-  
 bestowed;  
 When as she twined a laurel round my  
 brow,  
 And met my kiss, and half returned my  
 vow,  
 O'er all my frame shot rapid my thrilled  
 heart,  
 And every nerve confessed the electric  
 dart.

O dear Deceit! I see the Maiden rise,  
 Chaste Joyance dancing in her bright-  
 blue eyes!  
 When first the lark high-soaring swells  
 his throat,  
 Mocks the tired eye, and scatters the  
 loud note,  
 I trace her footsteps on the accustomed  
 lawn,  
 I mark her glancing mid the gleams of  
 dawn.  
 When the bent flower beneath the night-  
 dew weeps  
 And on the lake the silver lustre sleeps,

Amid the paly radiance soft and sad,  
She meets my lonely path in moonbeams  
clad.

With her along the streamlet's brink I  
rove;

With her I list the warblings of the  
grove;

And seems in each low wind her voice to  
float

Lone whispering Pity in each soothing  
note!

Spirits of Love! ye heard her name!  
Obey

The powerful spell, and to my haunt  
repair.

Whether on clustering pinions ye are  
there,

Where rich snows blossom on the Myrtle-  
trees,

Or with fond languishment around my fair  
Sigh in the loose luxuriance of her hair;

O heed the spell, and hither wing your way,  
Like far-off music, voyaging the breeze!

Spirits! to you the infant Maid was given  
Formed by the wondrous Alchemy of  
Heaven!

No fairer Maid does Love's wide empire  
know,

No fairer Maid e'er heaved the bosom's  
snow.

A thousand Loves around her forehead fly;  
A thousand Loves sit melting in her eye;

Love lights her smile—in Joy's red  
nectar dips

His myrtle flower, and plants it on her  
lips.

She speaks! and hark that passion-  
warbled song—

Still, Fancy! still that voice, those notes,  
prolong,

As sweet as when that voice with rap-  
turous falls

Shall wake the softened echoes of  
Heaven's Halls!

O (have I sigh'd) were mine the wizard's  
rod,

Or mine the power of Proteus, changeful  
God!<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I entreat the Public's pardon for having care-  
lessly suffered to be printed such intolerable stuff  
as this and the thirteen following lines. They  
have not the merit even of originality: as every  
thought is to be found in the Greek Epigrams.  
(From Coleridge's note in the *Poems*, 1796.)

A flower-entangled Arbor I would seem  
To shield my Love from Noontide's  
sultry beam:

Or bloom a Myrtle, from whose odorous  
boughs

My Love might weave gay garlands for  
her brows.

When Twilight stole across the fading vale,  
To fan my Love I'd be the Evening Gale;

Mourn in the soft folds of her swelling  
vest,

And flutter my faint pinions on her  
breast!

On Seraph wing I'd float a Dream by  
night,

To soothe my Love with shadows of  
delight:—

Or soar aloft to be the Spangled Skies,  
And gaze upon her with a thousand eyes!

As when the Savage, who his drowsy  
frame

Had basked beneath the Sun's unclouded  
flame,

Awakes amid the troubles of the air,  
The skiey deluge, and white lightning's  
glare—

Aghast he scours before the tempest's  
sweep,

And sad recalls the sunny hour of sleep:—  
So tossed by storms along Life's wilder-  
ing way,

Mine eye reverted views that cloudless  
day,

When by my native brook I wont to rove,  
While Hope with kisses nursed the In-  
fant Love.

Dear native brook! like Peace, so placidly  
Smoothing through fertile fields thy  
current meek!

Dear native brook! where first young  
Poesy

Stared wildly-eager in her noontide  
dream!

Where blameless pleasures dimple Quiet's  
cheek,

As water-lilies ripple thy slow stream!  
Dear native haunts! where Virtue still  
is gay,

Where Friendship's fixed star sheds a  
mellowed ray,

Where Love a crown of thornless Roses  
wears,

Where soften'd Sorrow smiles within her  
tears;

And Memory, with a Vestal's chaste  
 employ,  
 Unceasing feeds the lambent flame of joy!  
 No more your sky-larks melting from the  
 sight  
 Shall thrill the attuned heart-string with  
 delight—  
 No more shall deck your pensive Pleas-  
 ures sweet  
 With wreaths of sober hue my evening  
 seat,  
 Yet dear to Fancy's eye your varied scene  
 Of wood, hill, dale, and sparkling brook  
 between!  
 Yet sweet to Fancy's ear the warbled song,  
 That soars on Morning's wing your vales  
 among.

Scenes of my Hope! the aching eye ye  
 leave  
 Like yon bright hues that paint the clouds  
 of eve!  
 Tearful and saddening with the saddened  
 blaze  
 Mine eye the gleam pursues with wistful  
 gaze:  
 Sees shades on shades with deeper tint  
 impend,  
 Till chill and damp the moonless night  
 descend. 1793. 1796.

## LEWTI

## OR THE CIRCASSIAN LOVE-CHANT

At midnight by the stream I roved,  
 To forget the form I loved.  
 Image of Lewti! from my mind  
 Depart; for Lewti is not kind.

The Moon was high, the moonlight gleam  
 And the shadow of a star  
 Heaved upon Tamaha's stream;  
 But the rock shone brighter far,  
 The rock half sheltered from my view  
 By pendent boughs of tressy yew.—  
 So shines my Lewti's forehead fair,  
 Gleaming through her sable hair,  
 Image of Lewti! from my mind  
 Depart; for Lewti is not kind.

I saw a cloud of palest hue,  
 Onward to the moon it passed;  
 Still brighter and more bright it grew,  
 With floating colors not a few,  
 Till it reach'd the moon at last:

Then the cloud was wholly bright,  
 With a rich and amber light!  
 And so with many a hope I seek  
 And with such joy I find my Lewti;  
 And even so my pale wan cheek  
 Drinks in as deep a flush of beauty!  
 Nay, treacherous image! leave my mind,  
 If Lewti never will be kind.

The little cloud—it floats away,  
 Away it goes; away so soon?  
 Alas! it has no power to stay:  
 Its hues are dim, its hues are gray  
 Away it passes from the moon!  
 How mournfully it seems to fly,  
 Ever fading more and more,  
 To joyless regions of the sky—  
 And now 'tis whiter than before!  
 As white as my poor cheek will be,  
 When, Lewti! on my couch I lie,  
 A dying man for love of thee.  
 Nay, treacherous image! leave my mind—  
 And yet, thou didst not look unkind.

I saw a vapor in the sky.  
 Thin, and white, and very high;  
 I ne'er beheld so thin a cloud:  
 Perhaps the breezes that can fly  
 Now below and now above,  
 Have snatched aloft the lawny shroud  
 Of Lady fair—that died for love.  
 For maids, as well as youths, have  
 perished  
 From fruitless love too fondly cherished.  
 Nay, treacherous image! leave my mind—  
 For Lewti never will be kind.

Hush! my heedless feet from under  
 Slip the crumbling banks for ever:  
 Like echoes to a distant thunder,  
 They plunge into the gentle river.  
 The river-swans have heard my tread,  
 And startle from their reedy bed.  
 O beauteous birds! methinks ye measure  
 Your movements to some heavenly  
 tune!  
 O beauteous birds! 'tis such a pleasure  
 To see you move beneath the moon,  
 I would it were your true delight  
 To sleep by day and wake all night.

I know the place where Lewti lies  
 When silent night has closed her eyes:  
 It is a breezy jasmine-bower,  
 The nightingale sings o'er her head:  
 Voice of the Night! had I the power

That leafy labyrinth to thread,  
And creep, like thee, with soundless tread,  
I then might view her bosom white  
Heaving lovely to my sight,  
As these two swans together heave  
On the gently-swelling wave.

Oh! that she saw me in a dream,  
And dreamt that I had died for care;  
All pale and wasted I would seem  
Yet fair withal, as spirits are!  
I'd die indeed, if I might see  
Her bosom heave, and heave for me!  
Soothe, gentle image! soothe my mind!  
To-morrow Lewti may be kind.  
1794. April 13, 1798.

## LA FAYETTE

As when far off the warbled strains are  
heard  
That soar on Morning's wing the vales  
among;  
Within his cage the imprisoned matin  
bird  
Swells the full chorus with a generous song:  
He bathes no pinion in the dewy light,  
No Father's joy, no Lover's bliss he  
shares,  
Yet still the rising radiance cheers his  
sight —  
His fellows' freedom soothes the captive's  
cares!  
Thou, FAYETTE! who didst wake with  
startling voice  
Life's better sun from that long wintry  
night,  
Thus in thy Country's triumphs shalt  
rejoice  
And mock with raptures high the dun-  
geon's might:  
For lo! the morning struggles into day,  
And Slavery's spectres shriek and van-  
ish from the ray!  
1794. December 15, 1794.

REFLECTIONS ON HAVING LEFT  
A PLACE OF RETIREMENT

Sermoni propria. — HOR.

Low was our pretty Cot: our tallest rose  
Peeped at the chamber-window. We  
could hear

At silent noon, and eve, and early morn,  
The sea's faint murmur. In the open  
air  
Our myrtles blossom'd: and across the  
porch  
Thick jasmynes twined: the little land-  
scape round  
Was green and woody, and refreshed the  
eye.  
It was a spot which you might aptly call  
The Valley of Seclusion! Once I saw  
(Hallowing his Sabbath-day by quietness)  
A wealthy son of commerce saunter by,  
Bristow's citizen: methought, it calmed  
His thirst of idle gold, and made him  
muse  
With wiser feelings: for he paused, and  
looked  
With a pleased sadness, and gazed all  
around,  
Then eyed our Cottage, and gazed round  
again,  
And sighed, and said, it was a Blessed  
Place.  
And we *were* blessed. Oft with patient  
ear  
Long-listening to the viewless sky-lark's  
note  
(Viewless, or haply for a moment seen  
Gleaming on sunny wings) in whispered  
tones  
I've said to my beloved, "Such, sweet  
girl!  
The inobtrusive song of Happiness,  
Unearthly minstrelsy! then only heard  
When the soul seeks to hear; when all  
is hushed,  
And the heart listens!"

But the time, when first  
From that low dell, steep up the stony  
mount  
I climbed with perilous toil and reached  
the top,  
Oh! what a goodly scene! *Here* the  
bleak mount,  
The bare bleak mountain speckled thin  
with sheep;  
Gray clouds, that shadowing spot the  
sunny fields;  
And river, now with bushy rocks o'er  
browed,  
Now winding bright and full, with naked  
banks;  
And seats, and lawns, the abbey and the  
wood,

And cots, and hamlets, and faint city-  
spire;  
The Channel *there*, the Islands and white  
sails,  
Dim coasts, and cloud-like hills and  
shoreless Ocean—  
It seem'd like Omnipresence! God, me-  
thought,  
Had built him there a Temple: the  
whole World  
Seemed imaged in its vast circumference:  
No *wish* profaned my overwhelmed heart.  
Blest hour! It was a luxury,—to be!

Ah! quiet dell! dear cot, and mount  
sublime!  
I was constrained to quit you. Was it  
right,  
While my unnumbered brethren toiled  
and bled,  
That I should dream away the entrusted  
hours  
On rose-leaf beds, pampering the coward  
heart  
With feelings all too delicate for use?  
Sweet is the tear that from some How-  
ard's eye  
Drops on the cheek of one he lifts from  
earth:  
And he that works me good with un-  
moved face,  
Does it but half: he chills me while he  
aids,  
My benefactor, not my brother man!  
Yet even this, this cold beneficence  
Praise, praise it, O my Soul! oft as thou  
scann'st  
The sluggish Pity's vision-weaving tribe!  
Who sigh for wretchedness, yet shun the  
wretched,  
Nursing in some delicious solitude  
Their slothful loves and dainty sym-  
pathies!  
I therefore go, and join head, heart, and  
hand,  
Active and firm, to fight the bloodless  
fight  
Of science, freedom, and the truth in  
Christ.

Yet oft when after honorable toil  
Rests the tired mind, and waking loves  
to dream,  
My spirit shall revisit thee, dear Cot!  
Thy jasmine and thy window-peeping  
rose,

And myrtles fearless of the mild sea-air.  
And I shall sigh fond wishes—sweet  
abode!  
Ah!—had none greater! And that all  
had such!  
It might be so—but the time is not yet.  
Speed it, O Father! Let thy Kingdom  
come! 1795. October, 1796.

## TIME REAL AND IMAGINARY

### AN ALLEGORY

ON the wide level of a mountain's head,  
(I knew not where, but 'twas some faery  
place)  
Their pinions, ostrich-like, for sails out-  
spread,  
Two lovely children run an endless race,  
A sister and a brother!  
This far outstript the other;  
Yet ever runs she with reverted face,  
And looks and listens for the boy behind:  
For he, alas! is blind!  
O'er rough and smooth with even step he  
passed,  
And knows not whether he be first or  
last. ? . . . 1817.

## THIS LIME-TREE BOWER MY PRISON

ADDRESSED TO CHARLES LAMB, OF THE  
INDIA HOUSE, LONDON

In the June of 1797 some long-expected friends  
paid a visit to the author's cottage; and on the  
morning of their arrival, he met with an accident,  
which disabled him from walking during the whole  
time of their stay. One evening, when they had  
left him for a few hours, he composed the following  
lines in the garden-bower. (*Coleridge.*)

WELL, they are gone, and here must I  
remain,  
This lime-tree bower my prison! I have  
lost  
Beauties and feelings, such as would  
have been  
Most sweet to my remembrance even  
when age  
Had dimmed mine eyes to blindness!  
They, meanwhile,

<sup>1</sup>Included by Coleridge among his *Juvenile Poems*. There is no other evidence to indicate at what date it was written. See, however, a manuscript note of 1811 on the same subject, given in *Anima Poeta* at the beginning of Chap. VIII.



Friends, whom I never more may meet  
 again,  
 On springy heath, along the hill-top edge,  
 Wander in gladness, and wind down,  
 perchance,  
 To that still roaring dell, of which I told;  
 The roaring dell, o'erwooded, narrow,  
 deep,  
 And only speckled by the mid-day sun;  
 Where its slim trunk the ash from rock  
 to rock  
 Flings arching like a bridge;—that  
 branchless ash,  
 Unsunned and damp, whose few poor  
 yellow leaves  
 Ne'er tremble in the gale, yet tremble  
 still,  
 Fanned by the water-fall! and there my  
 friends  
 Behold the dark green file of long lank  
 weeds,  
 That all at once (a most fantastic sight!)  
 Still nod and drip beneath the dripping  
 edge  
 Of the blue clay-stone.

Now, my friends emerge  
 Beneath the wide wide Heaven—and  
 view again  
 The many-steepled tract magnificent  
 Of hilly fields and meadows, and the sea,  
 With some fair bark, perhaps, whose  
 sails light up  
 The slip of smooth clear blue betwixt two  
 Isles  
 Of purple shadow! Yes! they wander on  
 In gladness all; but thou, methinks, most  
 glad,  
 My gentle-hearted Charles! for thou hast  
 pined  
 And hungered after Nature, many a year,  
 In the great City pent, winning thy way  
 With sad yet patient soul, through evil  
 and pain  
 And strange calamity! Ah! slowly sink  
 Behind the western ridge, thou glorious  
 Sun!  
 Shine in the slant beams of the sinking  
 orb,  
 Ye purple heath-flowers! richlier burn,  
 ye clouds!  
 Live in the yellow light, ye distant groves!  
 And kindle, thou blue Ocean! So my  
 friend  
 Struck with deep joy may stand, as I  
 have stood,

Silent with swimming sense; yea, gazing  
 round  
 On the wide landscape, gaze till all doth  
 seem  
 Less gross than bodily; and of such hues  
 As veil the Almighty Spirit, when yet  
 he makes  
 Spirits perceive his presence.

A delight  
 Come sudden on my heart, and I am  
 glad  
 As I myself were there! Nor in this  
 bower,  
 This little lime-tree bower, have I not  
 marked  
 Much that has soothed me. Pale beneath  
 the blaze  
 Hung the transparent foliage; and I  
 watched  
 Some broad and sunny leaf, and loved to  
 see  
 The shadow of the leaf and stem above,  
 Dappling its sunshine! And that wal-  
 nut-tree  
 Was richly tinged, and a deep radiance  
 lay

Full on the ancient ivy, which usurps  
 Those fronting elms, and now, with  
 blackest mass  
 Makes their dark branches gleam a lighter  
 hue  
 Through the late twilight: and though  
 now the bat  
 Wheels silent by, and not a swallow  
 twitters,  
 Yet still the solitary humble-bee  
 Sings in the bean-flower! Henceforth I  
 shall know  
 That Nature ne'er deserts the wise and  
 pure;  
 No plot so narrow, be but Nature there,  
 No waste so vacant, but may well  
 employ  
 Each faculty of sense, and keep the  
 heart  
 Awake to Love and Beauty! and some-  
 times  
 'Tis well to be bereft of promised good,  
 That we may lift the soul, and contem-  
 plate  
 With lively joy the joys we cannot share.  
 My gentle-hearted Charles! when the  
 last look  
 Beat its straight path along the dusky air  
 Homewards, I blest it! deeming, its black  
 wing

(Now a dim speck, now vanishing in light)  
 Had cross'd the mighty orb's dilated glory,  
 While thou stood'st gazing; or when all  
     was still,  
 Flew creaking o'er thy head, and had a  
     charm  
 For thee, my gentle-hearted Charles, to  
     whom  
 No sound is dissonant which tells of  
     Life.                                 1797. 1800.

### KUBLA KHAN

In the summer of the year 1797, the Author, then in ill health, had retired to a lonely farm-house between Porlock and Linton, on the Exmoor confines of Somerset and Devonshire. In consequence of a slight indisposition, an anodyne had been prescribed, from the effects of which he fell asleep in his chair at the moment that he was reading the following sentence, or words of the same substance, in Purchas's "Pilgrimage": "Here the Khan Kubla commanded a palace to be built, and a stately garden thereunto. And thus ten miles of fertile ground were inclosed with a wall." The Author continued for about three hours in a profound sleep, at least of the external senses, during which time he has the most vivid confidence, that he could not have composed less than from two to three hundred lines; if that indeed can be called composition in which all the images rose up before him as *things*, with a parallel production of the correspondent expressions, without any sensation or consciousness of effort. On awaking he appeared to himself to have a distinct recollection of the whole, and taking his pen, ink, and paper, instantly and eagerly wrote down the lines that are here preserved. At this moment he was unfortunately called out by a person on business from Porlock, and detained by him above an hour, and on his return to his room, found, to his no small surprise and mortification, that though he still retained some vague and dim recollection of the general purport of the vision, yet, with the exception of some eight or ten scattered lines and images, all the rest had passed away, like the images on the surface of a stream into which a stone has been cast, but, alas! without the after restoration of the latter.

Then all the charm  
 Is broken — all that phantom-world so fair  
 Vanishes, and a thousand circlets spread,  
 And each mis-shapes the other. Stay awhile,  
 Poor youth! who scarcely dar'st lift up thine eyes —  
 The stream will soon renew its smoothness, soon  
 The visions will return! And lo, he stays,  
 And soon the fragments dim of lovely forms  
 Come trembling back, unite, and now once more  
 The pool becomes a mirror.

(From *The Picture; or, the Lover's Resolution*)  
 Yet from the still surviving recollections in his mind, the Author has frequently purposed to finish for himself what had been originally, as it were, given to him. *Αὐριον ἄδιον ἄσω*, but the to-morrow is yet to come. (Coleridge, 1816.)

IN Xanadu did Kubla Khan  
 A stately pleasure-dome decree:

Where Alph, the sacred river, ran  
 Through caverns measureless to man  
     Down to a sunless sea.  
 So twice five miles of fertile ground  
 With walls and towers were girdled round:  
 And here were gardens bright with sinuous  
     rills,  
 Where blossomed many an incense-bearing  
     tree;  
 And here were forests ancient as the  
     hills,  
 Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.

But oh! that deep romantic chasm which  
     slanted  
 Down the green hill athwart a cedarn  
     cover!  
 A savage place! as holy and enchanted  
 As e'er beneath a waning moon was  
     haunted  
 By woman wailing for her demon-lover!  
 And from this chasm, with ceaseless  
     turmoil seething,  
 As if this earth in fast thick pants were  
     breathing,  
 A mighty fountain momentarily was forced:  
 Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst  
 Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding  
     hail,  
 Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's  
     flail:  
 And 'mid these dancing rocks at once  
     and ever  
 It flung up momentarily the sacred river.  
 Five miles meandering with a mazy  
     motion  
 Through wood and dale the sacred river  
     ran,  
 Then reached the caverns measureless to  
     man,  
 And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean:  
 And 'mid this tumult Kubla heard from  
     far  
 Ancestral voices prophesying war!  
 The shadow of the dome of pleasure  
 Floated midway on the waves;  
 Where was heard the mingled measure  
     ure  
 From the fountain and the caves.  
 It was a miracle of rare device,  
 A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice!

A damsel with a dulcimer  
 In a vision once I saw:  
 It was an Abyssinian maid,  
 And on her dulcimer she played,

Singing of Mount Abora.  
 Could I revive within me  
 Her symphony and song,  
 To such a deep delight 'twould win  
 me,

That with music loud and long,  
 I would build that dome in air,  
 That sunny dome! those caves of ice!  
 And all who heard should see them  
 there,

And all should cry, Beware! Beware!  
 His flashing eyes, his floating hair!  
 Weave a circle round him thrice,  
 And close your eyes with holy dread,  
 For he on honey-dew hath fed,  
 And drunk the milk of Paradise.

1797. 1816.

### SONG FROM OSORIO

HEAR, sweet spirit, hear the spell,  
 Lest a blacker charm compel!  
 So shall the midnight breezes swell  
 With thy deep long-lingering knell.

And at evening evermore,  
 In a Chapel on the shore,  
 Shall the Chaunters sad and saintly,  
 Yellow tapers burning faintly,  
 Doleful Masses chaunt for thee,  
*Miserere Domine!*

Hark! the cadence dies away  
 On the quiet moonlight sea:  
 The boatmen rest their oars and say,  
*Miserere Domine!* 1797. 1813.

### THE RIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER<sup>1</sup>

#### IN SEVEN PARTS

Facile credo, plures esse Naturas invisibiles quam visibiles in rerum universitate. Sed horum omnium familiaris quis nobis enarrabit? et gradus et cognationes et discrimina et singulorum munera? Quid agunt? quæ loca habitant? Harum rerum notitiam semper ambivit ingenium humanum, nunquam attingit. Juvat, interea, non diffiteor, quandoque in animo, tanquam in tabula, majoris et melioris mundi imaginem contemplari: ne mens assuefacta hodiernæ vitæ minutis se contrahat nimis, et tota subsidat in pusillas cogitationes. Sed veritati interea invigilandum est, modusque servandus, ut certa ab incertis, diem a nocte, distinguamus. T. BURNET, *Archæol. Phil.* p. 68.

<sup>1</sup> The poem is here given in the text of 1829 which is Coleridge's final version, the result of several revisions, most of which are improvements over the first text of 1798. Instead of the third

### ARGUMENT<sup>1</sup>

How a Ship having passed the Line was driven by storms to the cold Country towards the South Pole; and how from thence she made her course to the tropical Latitude of the Great Pacific Ocean; and of the strange things that befell; and in what manner the Ancient Mariner came back to his own Country.

#### PART I

<sup>2</sup> It is an ancient Mariner,  
 And he stoppeth one of three.  
 "By thy long gray beard and glittering  
 eye,  
 Now wherefore stopp'st thou me?"

The Bridegroom's doors are opened wide,  
 And I am next of kin;  
 The guests are met, the feast is set:  
 May'st hear the merry din."

He holds him with his skinny hand,  
 "There was a ship," quoth he.  
 "Hold off! unhand me, gray-beard  
 loon!"  
 Eftsoons his hand dropt he.

<sup>3</sup> He holds him with his glittering eye —  
 The Wedding-Guest stood still,  
 And listens like a three years' child:  
 The Mariner hath his will.

The Wedding-Guest sat on a stone:  
 He cannot choose but hear;  
 And thus spake on that ancient man,  
 The bright-eyed Mariner.

stanza, for instance, the original text has the two following:

But still he holds the wedding-guest —  
 "There was a Ship," quoth he —  
 "Nay, if thou'st got a laughsome talc,  
 Marinere! come with me."

He holds him with his skinny hand,  
 Quoth he, "There was a Ship —"  
 "Now get thee hence, thou gray-beard Loon!  
 Or my Staff shall make thee skip."

For a full study of the different texts, see Prof. F. H. Sykes's *Select Poems of Coleridge and Wordsworth*, edited from Authors' Editions, Toronto, 1899. On the origin of the poem, see *Biographia Literaria*, Chap. XIV, and Wordsworth's account of it, quoted and discussed in H. D. Traill's *Life of Coleridge*, pp. 47-50.

<sup>1</sup> In the editions of 1798 and 1800 only.

<sup>2</sup> An ancient Mariner meeteth three Gallants bidden to a wedding-feast, and detaineth one. [This and the following notes, except those in brackets, are Coleridge's running summary of the story, first printed in *Sybilline Leaves*, 1817.]

<sup>3</sup> The Wedding-Guest is spell-bound by the eye of the old seafaring man, and constrained to hear his tale.

"The ship was cheered, the harbor cleared,  
Merrily did we drop  
Below the kirk, below the hill,  
Below the lighthouse top.

<sup>1</sup> The sun came up upon the left,  
Out of the sea came he!  
And he shone bright, and on the right  
Went down into the sea.

Higher and higher every day,  
Till over the mast at noon — "  
The Wedding-Guest here beat his breast,  
For he heard the loud bassoon,

<sup>2</sup> The bride hath paced into the hall,  
Red as a rose is she;  
Nodding their heads before her goes  
The merry minstrelsy.

The Wedding-Guest he beat his breast,  
Yet he cannot choose but hear;  
And thus spake on that ancient man,  
The bright-eyed Mariner.

<sup>3</sup> "And now the Storm-blast came, and he  
Was tyrannous and strong:  
He struck with his o'ertaking wings,  
And chased us south along.

With sloping masts and dipping prow,  
As who pursued with yell and blow  
Still treads the shadow of his foe,  
And forward bends his head,  
The ship drove fast, loud roared the blast,  
And southward aye we fled.

<sup>4</sup> And now there came both mist and snow,  
And it grew wondrous cold:  
And ice, mast-high, came floating by,  
As green as emerald.

And through the drifts the snowy clifts  
Did send a dismal sheen:  
Nor shapes of men nor beasts we ken —  
The ice was all between.

<sup>1</sup> The Mariner tells how the ship sailed southward with a good wind and fair weather, till it reached the line.

<sup>2</sup> The Wedding Guest heareth the bridal music, but the Mariner continueth his tale.

<sup>3</sup> The ship drawn by a storm toward the south pole.

<sup>4</sup> The land of ice, and of fearful sounds, where no living thing was to be seen.

The ice was here, the ice was there,  
The ice was all around:  
It cracked and growled, and roared and  
howled,  
Like voices in a swoond!

<sup>1</sup> At length did cross an Albatross,  
Thorough the fog it came;  
As if it had been a Christian soul,  
We hailed it in God's name.

It ate the food it ne'er had eat,  
And round and round it flew.  
The ice did split with a thunder-fit;  
The helmsman steered us through!

<sup>2</sup> And a good south wind sprung up behind;  
The Albatross did follow,  
And every day, for food or play,  
Came to the mariner's hollo!

In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud,  
It perched for vespers nine;  
While all the night, through fog-smoke  
white,  
Glimmered the white moon-shine."

<sup>3</sup> "God save thee, ancient Mariner!  
From the fiends, that plague thee thus! —  
Why look'st thou so?" — With my cross-  
bow  
I shot the ALBATROSS.

## PART II

The Sun now rose upon the right:  
Out of the sea came he,  
Still hid in mist, and on the left  
Went down into the sea.

And the good south wind still blew behind,  
But no sweet bird did follow,  
Nor any day for food or play  
Came to the mariners' hollo!

<sup>1</sup> Till a great sea bird, called the Albatross, came through the snow-fog, and was received with great joy and hospitality.

<sup>2</sup> And lo! the Albatross proveth a bird of good omen, and followeth the ship as it returned northward through fog and floating ice.

<sup>3</sup> The ancient Mariner inhospitably killeth the pious bird of good omen.



<sup>1</sup> And I had done a hellish thing,  
And it would work 'em woe :  
For all averred, I had killed the bird,  
That made the breeze to blow.  
Ah wretch ! said they, the bird to slay,  
That made the breeze to blow !

<sup>2</sup> Nor dim nor red, like God's own head,  
The glorious Sun uprist :  
Then all averred, I had killed the bird  
That brought the fog and mist.  
'Twas right, said they, such birds to slay,  
That bring the fog and mist.

<sup>3</sup> The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,  
The furrow followed free ;  
We were the first that ever burst  
Into that silent sea.

<sup>4</sup> Down dropt the breeze, the sails dropt  
down,  
'Twas sad as sad could be ;  
And we did speak only to break  
The silence of the sea !

All in a hot and copper sky,  
The bloody Sun, at noon,  
Right up above the mast did stand,  
No bigger than the Moon.

Day after day, day after day,  
We stuck, nor breath nor motion ;  
As idle as a painted ship  
Upon a painted ocean.

<sup>5</sup> Water, water, everywhere,  
And all the boards did shrink ;  
Water, water, everywhere  
Nor any drop to drink.

The very deep did rot : O Christ !  
That ever this should be !  
Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs  
Upon the slimy sea.

About, about, in reel and rout  
The death-fires danced at night ;  
The water, like a witch's oils,  
Burnt green, and blue and white.

<sup>1</sup> His shipmates cry out against the ancient  
Mariner, for killing the bird of good luck.

<sup>2</sup> But when the fog cleared off, they justify the  
same, and thus make themselves accomplices in the  
crime.

<sup>3</sup> The fair breeze continues ; the ship enters the  
Pacific Ocean, and sails northward, even till it  
reaches the Line.

<sup>4</sup> The ship hath been suddenly becalmed.

<sup>5</sup> And the Albatross begins to be avenged.

<sup>1</sup> And some in dreams assurèd were  
Of the Spirit that plagued us so ;  
Nine fathom deep he had followed us  
From the land of mist and snow.

And every tongue, through utter drought,  
Was withered at the root ;  
We could not speak, no more than if  
We had been choked with soot.

<sup>2</sup> Ah ! well a-day ! what evil looks  
Had I from old and young !  
Instead of the cross, the Albatross  
About my neck was hung.

## PART III

There passed a weary time. Each throat  
Was parched, and glazed each eye.  
A weary time ! a weary time !  
How glazed each weary eye ! —  
<sup>3</sup> When looking westward, I beheld  
A something in the sky.

At first it seemed a little speck,  
And then it seemed a mist ;  
It moved and moved, and took at last  
A certain shape, I wist.

A speck, a mist, a shape, I wist !  
And still it neared and neared :  
As if it dodged a water-sprite,  
It plunged and tacked and veered.

<sup>4</sup> With throats unslaked, with black lips  
baked,  
We could nor laugh nor wail ;  
Through utter drought all dumb we  
stood !  
I bit my arm, I sucked the blood,  
And cried, A sail ! a sail !

<sup>1</sup> A Spirit had followed them ; one of the in-  
visible inhabitants of this planet, neither departed  
souls nor angels ; concerning whom the learned  
Jew, Josephus, and the Platonic Constantinopolitan,  
Michael Psellus, may be consulted. They are very  
numerous, and there is no climate or element with-  
out one or more.

<sup>2</sup> The shipmates, in their sore distress, would fain  
throw the whole guilt on the ancient Mariner : in  
sign whereof they hang the dead seabird round his  
neck.

<sup>3</sup> The ancient Mariner beholdeth a sign in the  
element afar off.

<sup>4</sup> At its nearer approach, it seemeth him to be  
a ship ; and at a dear ransom he freeth his speech  
from the bonds of thirst.



With throats unslaked, with black lips  
baked,

Agape they heard me call:

<sup>1</sup> Gramercy! they for joy did grin,  
And all at once their breath drew in,  
As they were drinking all.

<sup>2</sup> See! see! (I cried) she tacks no more!  
Hither to work us weal,  
Without a breeze, without a tide,  
She steadies with upright keel!

The western wave was all aflame.  
The day was well-nigh done!  
Almost upon the western wave  
Rested the broad bright Sun;  
When that strange shape drove suddenly  
Betwixt us and the Sun.

<sup>3</sup> And straight the Sun was flecked with  
bars,  
(Heaven's Mother send us grace!)  
As if through a dungeon-grate he peered  
With broad and burning face.

Alas! (thought I, and my heart beat loud)  
How fast she nears and nears!  
Are those her sails that glance in the Sun,  
Like restless gossameres?

<sup>4</sup> Are those her ribs through which the Sun  
Did peer, as through a grate?  
And is that Woman all her crew?  
Is that a Death? and are there two?  
<sup>5</sup> Is Death that woman's mate?

<sup>6</sup> Her lips were red, her looks were free,  
Her locks were yellow as gold:  
Her skin was as white as leprosy,  
The Night-mare Life-in-Death was she,  
Who thicks man's blood with cold.

<sup>7</sup> The naked hulk alongside came,  
And the twain were casting dice;  
"The game is done! I've won! I've won!"  
Quoth she, and whistles thrice.

<sup>1</sup> A flash of joy.

<sup>2</sup> And horror follows. For can it be a ship that comes onward without wind or tide?

<sup>3</sup> It seemeth him but the skeleton of a ship.

<sup>4</sup> And its ribs are seen as bars on the face of the setting Sun.

<sup>5</sup> The Spectre-Woman and her Death-mate, and no other on board the skeleton-ship.

<sup>6</sup> Like vessel, like crew!

<sup>7</sup> Death and Life-in-Death have dined for the ship's crew, and she (the latter) winneth the ancient Mariner.

<sup>1</sup> The Sun's rim dips; the stars rush out  
At one stride comes the dark;  
With far-heard whisper, o'er the sea,  
Off shot the spectre-bark.

<sup>2</sup> We listened and looked sideways up!  
Fear at my heart, as at a cup,  
My life-blood seemed to sip!  
The stars were dim, and thick the night,  
The steersman's face by his lamp gleamed  
white;  
From the sails the dew did drip—  
Till clomb above the eastern bar  
The horned Moon, with one bright star  
Within the nether tip.

<sup>3</sup> One after one, by the star-dogged Moon,  
Too quick for groan or sigh,  
Each turned his face with a ghastly pang,  
And cursed me with his eye.

<sup>4</sup> Four times fifty living men,  
(And I heard nor sigh nor groan)  
With heavy thump, a lifeless lump,  
They dropped down one by one.

<sup>5</sup> The souls did from their bodies fly,—  
They fled to bliss or woe!  
And every soul, it passed me by,  
Like the whizz of my cross-bow!" —

#### PART IV

<sup>6</sup> "I fear thee, ancient Mariner!  
I fear thy skinny hand  
And thou art long, and lank, and brown,  
As is the ribbed sea-sand."<sup>7</sup>

I fear thee and thy glittering eye,  
And thy skinny hand, so brown."

<sup>8</sup> Fear not, fear not, thou Wedding-Guest!  
This body dropt not down.

<sup>1</sup> No twilight within the courts of the Sun.

<sup>2</sup> At the rising of the Moon,

<sup>3</sup> One after another,

<sup>4</sup> His shipmates drop down dead.

<sup>5</sup> But Life-in-Death begins her work on the ancient Mariner.

<sup>6</sup> The Wedding-Guest feareth that a Spirit is talking to him.

<sup>7</sup> [For the last two lines of this stanza, I am indebted to Mr. Wordsworth. It was on a delightful walk from Nether Stowey to Dulverton, with him and his sister, in the autumn of 1797, that this poem was planned, and in part composed. (Note of Coleridge, first printed in *Sibylline Leaves*, 1817.)]

<sup>8</sup> But the ancient Mariner assureth him of his bodily life, and proceedeth to relate his horrible penance.

Alone, alone, all, all alone,  
Alone on a wide wide sea!  
And never a saint took pity on  
My soul in agony.

<sup>1</sup> The many men, so beautiful!  
And they all dead did lie:  
And a thousand thousand slimy things  
Lived on; and so did I.

<sup>2</sup> I looked upon the rotting sea,  
And drew my eyes away;  
I looked upon the rotting deck,  
And there the dead men lay.

I looked to heaven, and tried to pray;  
But or ever a prayer had gusht,  
A wicked whisper came, and made  
My heart as dry as dust.

I closed my lids, and kept them close,  
And the balls like pulses beat;  
For the sky and the sea, and the sea and  
the sky  
Lay like a load on my weary eye,  
And the dead were at my feet.

<sup>3</sup> The cold sweat melted from their limbs,  
Nor rot nor reek did they:  
The look with which they looked on me  
Had never passed away.

An orphan's curse would drag to hell  
A spirit from on high;  
But oh! more horrible than that  
Is a curse in a dead man's eye!  
Seven days, seven nights, I saw that  
curse,  
And yet I could not die.

<sup>4</sup> The moving Moon went up the sky.  
And nowhere did abide:  
Softly she was going up,  
And a star or two beside —

<sup>1</sup> He despiseth the creatures of the calm.

<sup>2</sup> And envieth that *they* should live, and so many  
lie dead.

<sup>3</sup> But the curse liveth for him in the eye of the  
dead men.

<sup>4</sup> In his loneliness and fixedness he yearneth to-  
wards the journeying Moon, and the stars that still  
sojourn, yet still move onward; and everywhere the  
blue sky belongs to them, and is their appointed  
rest, and their native country and their own natural  
homes, which they enter unannounced, as lords that  
are certainly expected, and yet there is a silent joy  
at their arrival.

Her beams bemoaned the sultry main,  
Like April hoar-frost spread;  
But where the ship's huge shadow lay,  
The charmed water burnt alway  
A still and awful red.

<sup>1</sup> Beyond the shadow of the ship,  
I watched the water-snakes:  
They moved in tracks of shining white,  
And when they reared, the elfish light  
Fell off in hoary flakes.

Within the shadow of the ship  
I watched their rich attire:  
Blue, glossy green, and velvet black,  
They coiled and swam; and every track  
Was a flash of golden fire.

<sup>2</sup> O happy livings things! no tongue  
Their beauty might declare:  
A spring of love gushed from my heart

<sup>3</sup> And I blessed them unaware:  
Sure my kind saint took pity on me,  
And I blessed them unaware.

<sup>4</sup> The selfsame moment I could pray;  
And from my neck so free  
The Albatross fell off, and sank  
Like lead into the sea.

#### PART V

Oh sleep! it is a gentle thing,  
Beloved from pole to pole!  
To Mary Queen the praise be given!  
She sent the gentle sleep from Heaven,  
That slid into my soul.

<sup>5</sup> The silly buckets on the deck,  
That had so long remained,  
I dreamt that they were filled with dew;  
And when I awoke, it rained.

My lips were wet, my throat was cold,  
My garments all were dank;  
Sure I had drunken in my dreams,  
And still my body drank.

I moved, and could not feel my limbs:  
I was so light — almost  
I thought that I had died in sleep,  
And was a blessed ghost.

<sup>1</sup> By the light of the Moon he beholdeth God's  
creatures of the great calm.

<sup>2</sup> Their beauty and their happiness.

<sup>3</sup> He blesseth them in his heart.

<sup>4</sup> The spell begins to break.

<sup>5</sup> By grace of the holy Mother, the ancient  
Mariner is refreshed with rain.

<sup>1</sup> And soon I heard a roaring wind :  
It did not come anear :  
But with its sound it shook the sails,  
That were so thin and sere.

The upper air burst into life !  
And a hundred fire-flags sheen,  
To and fro they were hurried about !  
And to and fro, and in and out,  
The wan stars danced between.

And the coming wind did roar more loud,  
And the sails did sigh like sedge ;  
And the rain poured down from one black  
cloud ;  
The Moon was at its edge.

The thick black cloud was cleft, and still  
The Moon was at its side :  
Like waters shot from some high crag,  
The lightning fell with never a jag,  
A river steep and wide.

<sup>2</sup> The loud wind never reached the ship,  
Yet now the ship moved on !  
Beneath the lightning and the Moon  
The dead men gave a groan.

They groaned, they stirred, they all up-  
rose,  
Nor spake, nor moved their eyes ;  
It had been strange, even in a dream,  
To have seen those dead men rise.

The helmsman steered, the ship moved on ;  
Yet never a breeze up blew ;  
The mariners all 'gan work the ropes,  
Where they were wont to do ;  
They raised their limbs like lifeless  
tools -

We were a ghastly crew.

The body of my brother's son  
Stood by me, knee to knee :  
The body and I pulled at one rope  
But he said nought to me. —

<sup>3</sup> "I fear thee, ancient Mariner !" —  
Be calm, thou Wedding-Guest !

<sup>1</sup> He heareth sounds and seeth strange sights and commotions in the sky and the element.

<sup>2</sup> The bodies of the ship's crew are inspired, and the ship moves on ;

<sup>3</sup> But not by the souls of the men, nor by demons of earth or middle air, but by a blessed troop of angelic spirits, sent down by the invocation of the guardian saint.

'Twas not those souls that fled in pain,  
Which to their corse came again,  
But a troop of spirits blest :

For when it dawned — they dropped their  
arms,  
And clustered round the mast ;  
Sweet sounds rose slowly through their  
mouths,  
And from their bodies passed.

Around, around, flew each sweet sound,  
Then darted to the Sun ;  
Slowly the sounds came back again,  
Now mixed, now one by one.

Sometimes a-dropping from the sky  
I heard the sky-lark sing ;  
Sometimes all little birds that are,  
How they seemed to fill the sea and air  
With their sweet jargoning !

And now 'twas like all instruments,  
Now like a lonely flute ;  
And now it is an angel's song,  
That makes the heavens be mute.

It ceased ; yet still the sails made on  
A pleasant noise till noon,  
A noise like of a hidden brook  
In the leafy month of June,  
That to the sleeping woods all night  
Singeth a quiet tune.

Till noon we quietly sailed on,  
Yet never a breeze did breathe :  
Slowly and smoothly went the ship,  
Moved onward from beneath.

<sup>1</sup> Under the keel nine fathom deep,  
From the land of mist and snow,  
The spirit slid : and it was he  
That made the ship to go.  
The sails at noon left off their tune,  
And the ship stood still also.

The Sun, right up above the mast,  
Had fixed her to the ocean :  
But in a minute she 'gan stir,  
With a short uneasy motion —  
Backwards and forwards half her length  
With a short uneasy motion.

<sup>1</sup> The lonesome Spirit from the south-pole carries on the ship as far as the Line, in obedience to the angelic troop, but still requireth vengeance.

Then like a pawing horse let go,  
She made a sudden bound :  
It flung the blood into my head,  
And I fell down in a swoond.

<sup>1</sup> How long in that same fit I lay,  
I have not to declare ;  
But ere my living life returned,  
I heard and in my soul discerned  
Two voices in the air.

"Is it he?" quoth one, "Is this the man?  
By him who died on cross;  
With his cruel bow he laid full low  
The harmless Albatross.

The spirit who bideth by himself  
In the land of mist and snow,  
He loved the bird that loved the man  
Who shot him with his bow."

The other was a softer voice,  
As soft as honey-dew :  
Quoth he, "The man hath penance done,  
And penance more will do."

## PART VI

## FIRST VOICE

"But tell me, tell me! speak again,  
Thy soft response renewing—  
What makes that ship drive on so fast?  
What is the ocean doing?"

## SECOND VOICE

"Still as a slave before his lord,  
The ocean hath no blast;  
His great bright eye most silently  
Up to the Moon is cast—

If he may know which way to go;  
For she guides him smooth or grim.  
See, brother, see! how graciously  
She looketh down on him."

## FIRST VOICE

<sup>2</sup> "But why drives on that ship so fast,  
Without or wave or wind?"

<sup>1</sup> The Polar Spirit's fellow-demons, the invisible inhabitants of the element, take part in his wrong; and two of them relate one to the other, that penance long and heavy for the ancient Mariner hath been accorded to the Polar Spirit, who returneth southward.

<sup>2</sup> The Mariner hath been cast into a trance; for the angelic power causeth the vessel to drive northward faster than human life could endure.

## SECOND VOICE

"The air is cut away before,  
And closes from behind.

Fly, brother, fly! more high, more high!  
Or we shall be belated:  
For slow and slow that ship will go,  
When the Mariner's trance is abated."

<sup>1</sup> I woke, and we were sailing on  
As in a gentle weather:  
'Twas night, calm night, the Moon was  
high,  
The dead men stood together.

All stood together on the deck,  
For a charnel-dungeon fitter:  
All fixed on me their stony eyes,  
That in the Moon did glitter.

The pang, the curse, with which they  
died,  
Had never passed away:  
I could not draw my eyes from theirs,  
Nor turn them up to pray.

<sup>2</sup> And now this spell was snapt: once more  
I viewed the ocean green,  
And looked far forth, yet little saw  
Of what had else been seen—

Like one, that on a lonesome road  
Doth walk in fear and dread,  
And having once turned round walks on,  
And turns no more his head;  
Because he knows, a frightful fiend  
Doth close behind him tread.

But soon there breathed a wind on me,  
Nor sound nor motion made:  
Its path was not upon the sea,  
In ripple or in shade.

It raised my hair, it fanned my cheek  
Like a meadow-gale of spring—  
It mingled strangely with my fears,  
Yet it felt like a welcoming.

Swiftly, swiftly flew the ship,  
Yet she sailed softly too:  
Sweetly, sweetly blew the breeze—  
On me alone it blew.

<sup>1</sup> The supernatural motion is retarded; the Mariner awakes, and his penance begins anew.

<sup>2</sup> The curse is finally expiated.

<sup>1</sup> Oh! dream of joy! is this indeed  
The light-house top I see?  
Is this the hill? is this the kirk?  
Is this mine own countree?

We drifted o'er the harbor-bar,  
And I with sobs did pray —  
O let me be awake, my God!  
Or let me sleep alway.

The harbor-bay was clear as glass,  
So smoothly it was strewn!  
And on the bay the moonlight lay,  
And the shadow of the Moon.

The rock shone bright, the kirk no less,  
That stands above the rock:  
The moonlight steeped in silentness  
The steady weathercock.

And the bay was white with silent light  
Till rising from the same,  
<sup>2</sup> Full many shapes, that shadows were,  
In crimson colors came.

<sup>3</sup> A little distance from the prow  
Those crimson shadows were:  
I turned my eyes upon the deck —  
Oh, Christ! what saw I there!

Each corse lay flat, lifeless and flat,  
And, by the holy rood!  
A man all light, a seraph-man,  
On every corse there stood.

This seraph-band, each waved his hand:  
It was a heavenly sight!  
They stood as signals to the land,  
Each one a lovely light;

This seraph-band, each waved his hand,  
No voice did they impart —  
No voice; but oh! the silence sank  
Like music on my heart.

But soon I heard the dash of oars,  
I heard the Pilot's cheer;  
My head was turned perforce away,  
And I saw a boat appear.

The Pilot and the Pilot's boy,  
I heard them coming fast:

<sup>1</sup> And the ancient Mariner beholdeth his native country.

<sup>2</sup> The angelic spirits leave the dead bodies,

<sup>3</sup> And appear in their own forms of light.

Dear Lord in Heaven! it was a joy  
The dead men could not blast.

I saw a third — I heard his voice:  
It is the Hermit good!  
He singeth loud his godly hymns  
That he makes in the wood.  
He'll shrive me my soul, he'll wash away  
The Albatross's blood.

#### PART VII

<sup>1</sup> This Hermit good lives in that wood  
Which slopes down to the sea.  
How loudly his sweet voice he rears!  
He loves to talk with marineres  
That come from a far countree.

He kneels at morn, and noon, and eve —  
He hath a cushion plump:  
It is the moss that wholly hides  
The rotted old oak-stump.

The skiff-boat neared: I heard them talk,  
"Why, this is strange, I trow!  
Where are those lights so many and fair,  
That signal made but now?"

<sup>2</sup> "Strange, by my faith!" the Hermit  
said —

"And they answered not our cheer!  
The planks look warped! and see those  
sails,

How thin they are and sere!  
I never saw aught like to them,  
Unless perchance it were

Brown skeletons of leaves that lag  
My forest-brook along;  
When the ivy-tod is heavy with snow,  
And the owl whoops to the wolf below,  
That eats the she-wolf's young."

"Dear Lord! it hath a fiendish look —  
(The Pilot made reply)  
I am a-feared." — "Push on, push on!"  
Said the Hermit cheerily.

The boat came closer to the ship,  
But I nor spake nor stirred;  
The boat came close beneath the ship,  
And straight a sound was heard.

<sup>1</sup> The Hermit of the Wood.

<sup>2</sup> Approacheth the ship with wonder.



<sup>1</sup> Under the water it rumbled on,  
Still louder and more dread:  
It reached the ship, it split the bay;  
The ship went down like lead.

<sup>2</sup> Stunned by that loud and dreadful sound,  
Which sky and ocean smote  
Like one that hath been seven days  
drowned  
My body lay afloat;  
But swift as dreams, myself I found  
Within the Pilot's boat.

Upon the whirl, where sank the ship,  
The boat spun round and round;  
And all was still, save that the hill  
Was telling of the sound.

I moved my lips — the Pilot shrieked  
And fell down in a fit;  
The Holy Hermit raised his eyes,  
And prayed where he did sit.

I took the oars: The Pilot's boy  
Who now doth crazy go  
Laughed loud and long, and all the while  
His eyes went to and fro.  
"Ha! ha!" quoth he, "full plain I see,  
The Devil knows how to row."

And now, all in my own countree,  
I stood on the firm land!  
The Hermit stepped forth from the boat,  
And scarcely he could stand.

<sup>3</sup> "O shrieve me, shrieve me, holy man!"  
The Hermit crossed his brow.  
"Say quick," quoth he, "I bid thee say —  
What manner of man art thou?"

Forthwith this frame of mine was  
wrenched  
With a woful agony,  
Which forced me to begin my tale;  
And then it left me free.

<sup>4</sup> Since then, at an uncertain hour,  
That agony returns:

<sup>1</sup> The ship suddenly sinketh.

<sup>2</sup> The ancient Mariner is saved in the Pilot's boat.

<sup>3</sup> The ancient Mariner earnestly entreateth the Hermit to shrieve him; and the penance of life falls on him.

<sup>4</sup> And ever and anon throughout his future life an agony constraineth him to travel from land to land,

And till my ghastly tale is told,  
This heart within me burns.

I pass, like night, from land to land;  
I have strange power of speech;  
That moment that his face I see,  
I know the man that must hear me:  
To him my tale I teach.

What loud uproar burst from that door!  
The wedding-guests are there:  
But in the garden-bower the bride  
And bride-maids singing are:  
And hark the little vesper bell,  
Which biddeth me to prayer!

O Wedding-Guest! this soul hath been  
Alone on a wide wide sea;  
So lonely, 'twas, that God himself  
Scarce seemed there to be.

O sweeter than the marriage-feast,  
'Tis sweeter far to me,  
To walk together to the kirk,  
With a goodly company! —

To walk together to the kirk,  
And all together pray.  
While each to his great Father bends,  
Old men, and babes, and loving friends  
And youths and maidens gay!

<sup>1</sup> Farewell, farewell! but this I tell  
To thee, thou Wedding-Guest!  
He prayeth well, who loveth well  
Both man and bird and beast.

He prayeth best, who loveth best  
All things both great and small;  
For the dear God who loveth us,  
He made and loveth all.

The Mariner, whose eye is bright,  
Whose beard with age is hoar,  
Is gone; and now the Wedding-Guest  
Turned from the bridegroom's door.

He went like one that hath been stunned,  
And is of sense forlorn:  
A sadder and a wiser man,  
He rose the morrow morn.

1797-1798. 1798.

<sup>1</sup> And to teach, by his own example, love and reverence to all things that God made and loveth.

CHRISTABEL

The first part of the following poem was written in the year one thousand seven hundred and ninety-seven, at Stowey, in the county of Somerset. The second part, after my return from Germany, in the year one thousand eight hundred, at Keswick, Cumberland. Since the latter date, my poetic powers have been, till very lately, in a state of suspended animation. But as, in my very first conception of the tale, I had the whole present to my mind, with the wholeness, no less than with the liveliness of a vision; I trust that I shall be able to embody in verse the three parts yet to come, in the course of the present year. . . .

I have only to add, that the metre of the Christabel is not, properly speaking, irregular, though it may seem so from its being founded on a new principle: namely, that of counting in each line the accents, not the syllables. Though the latter may vary from seven to twelve, yet in each line the accents will be found to be only four. Nevertheless this occasional variation in number of syllables is not introduced wantonly, or for the mere ends of convenience, but in correspondence with some transition in the nature of the imagery or passion. (From Coleridge's *Preface* to the first edition.)

## PART THE FIRST

'Tis the middle of night by the castle clock,  
And the owls have awakened the crow-  
ing cock,  
Tu — whit! — Tu — whoo!  
And hark, again! the crowing cock,  
How drowsily it crew.

Sir Leoline, the Baron rich,  
Hath a toothless mastiff, which  
From her kennel beneath the rock  
Maketh answer to the clock,  
Four for the quarters, and twelve for the  
hour;

Ever and aye, by shine and shower,  
Sixteen short howls, not over loud;  
Some say, she sees my lady's shroud.

Is the night chilly and dark?  
The night is chilly, but not dark.  
The thin gray cloud is spread on high,  
It covers but not hides the sky.  
The moon is behind, and at the full;  
And yet she looks both small and dull.  
The night is chill, the cloud is gray;  
'Tis a month before the month of May,  
And the Spring comes slowly up this way.

The lovely lady, Christabel,  
Whom her father loves so well,  
What makes her in the woods so late,  
A furlong from the castle gate?  
She had dreams all yesternight  
Of her own betrothed knight;

And she in the midnight wood will pray  
For the weal of her lover that's far away.

She stole along, she nothing spoke,  
The sighs she heaved were soft and low,  
And naught was green upon the oak  
But moss and rarest misletoe:  
She kneels beneath the huge oak tree,  
And in silence prayeth she.

The lady sprang up suddenly,  
The lovely lady, Christabel!  
It moaned as near, as near can be,  
But what it is she cannot tell. —  
On the other side it seems to be,  
Of the huge, broad-breasted, old oak tree.

The night is chill; the forest bare;  
Is it the wind that moaneth bleak?  
There is not wind enough in the air  
To move away the ringlet curl  
From the lovely lady's cheek —  
There is not wind enough to twirl  
The one red leaf, the last of its clan,  
That dances as often as dance it can,  
Hanging so light, and hanging so high,  
On the topmost twig that looks up at  
the sky.

Hush, beating heart of Christabel!  
Jesu, Maria, shield her well!  
She folded her arms beneath her cloak,  
And stole to the other side of the oak.  
What sees she there?

There she sees a damsel bright,  
Drest in a silken robe of white,  
That shadowy in the moonlight shone:  
The neck that made the white robe wan,  
Her stately neck, and arms were bare;  
Her blue-veined feet unsandal'd were,  
And wildly glittered here and there  
The gems entangled in her hair.  
I guess, 'twas frightful there to see  
A lady so richly clad as she —  
Beautiful exceedingly!

Mary mother, save me now!  
(Said Christabel,) And who art thou?

The lady strange made answer meet,  
And her voice was faint and sweet: —  
Have pity on my sore distress,  
I scarce can speak for weariness:  
Stretch forth thy hand, and have no fear!  
Said Christabel, How camest thou here?

And the lady, whose voice was faint and sweet,  
Did thus pursue her answer meet :

My sire is of a noble line,  
And my name is Geraldine :  
Five warriors seized me yestermorn,  
Me, even me, a maid forlorn :  
They choked my cries with force and fright.

And tied me on a palfrey white.  
The palfrey was as fleet as wind,  
And they rode furiously behind.  
They spurred amain, their steeds were white :

And once we crossed the shade of night.  
As sure as Heaven shall rescue me,  
I have no thought what men they be ;  
Nor do I know how long it is  
(For I have lain entranced I wis)  
Since one, the tallest of the five,  
Took me from the palfrey's back,  
A weary woman, scarce alive.

Some muttered words his comrades spoke :  
He placed me underneath this oak ;  
He swore they would return with haste ;  
Whither they went I cannot tell —  
I thought I heard, some minutes past,  
Sounds as of a castle bell.  
Stretch forth thy hand (thus ended she),  
And help a wretched maid to flee.

Then Christabel stretched forth her hand,  
And comforted fair Geraldine :  
O well, bright dame ! may you command  
The service of Sir Leoline ;  
And gladly our stout chivalry  
Will he send forth and friends withal  
To guide and guard you safe and free  
Home to your noble father's hall.

She rose : and forth with steps they passed  
That strove to be, and were not, fast.  
Her gracious stars the lady blest,  
And thus spake on sweet Christabel :  
All our household are at rest  
The hall as silent as the cell ;  
Sir Leoline is weak in health,  
And may not well awakened be,  
But we will move as if in stealth,  
And I beseech your courtesies,  
This night, to share your couch with me.

They crossed the moat, and Christabel  
Took the key that fitted well ;  
A little door she opened straight,  
All in the middle of the gate ;

The gate that was ironed within and without,  
Where an army in battle array had  
marched out.

The lady sank, belike through pain,  
And Christabel with might and main  
Lifted her up, a weary weight,  
Over the threshold of the gate :  
Then the lady rose again,  
And moved, as she were not in pain.

So free from danger, free from fear,  
They crossed the court ; right glad they  
were.

And Christabel devoutly cried  
To the lady by her side,  
Praise we the Virgin all divine  
Who hath rescued thee from thy distress !  
Alas, alas ! said Geraldine,  
I cannot speak for weariness.  
So free from danger, free from fear,  
They crossed the court : right glad they  
were.

Outside her kennel, the mastiff old  
Lay fast asleep, in moonshine cold.  
The mastiff old did not awake,  
Yet she an angry moan did make !  
And what can ail the mastiff bitch ?  
Never till now she uttered yell  
Beneath the eye of Christabel.  
Perhaps it is the owl's scritch :  
For what can ail the mastiff bitch ?

They passed the hall, that echoes still,  
Pass as lightly as you will !  
The brands were flat, the brands were  
dying,

Amid their own white ashes lying ;  
But when the lady passed, there came  
A tongue of light, a fit of flame ;  
And Christabel saw the lady's eye,  
And nothing else saw she thereby,  
Save the boss of the shield of Sir Leoline  
tall,

Which hung in a murky old niche in the  
wall.

O softly tread, said Christabel,  
My father seldom sleepeth well.

Sweet Christabel her feet doth bare,  
And jealous of the listening air  
They steal their way from stair to stair  
Now in glimmer, and now in gloom,  
And now they pass the Baron's room,  
As still as death, with stifled breath !

And now have reached her chamber  
door;  
And now doth Geraldine press down  
The rushes of the chamber floor.

The moon shines dim in the open air,  
And not a moonbeam enters here.  
But they without its light can see  
The chamber carved so curiously,  
Carved with figures strange and sweet  
All made out of the carver's brain,  
For a lady's chamber meet;  
The lamp with twofold silver chain  
Is fastened to an angel's feet.

The silver lamp burns dead and dim;  
But Christabel the lamp will trim.  
She trimmed the lamp, and made it  
bright,  
And left it swinging to and fro,  
While Geraldine, in wretched plight,  
Sank down upon the floor below.

O weary lady, Geraldine,  
I pray you, drink this cordial wine!  
It is a wine of virtuous powers;  
My mother made it of wild flowers.

And will your mother pity me,  
Who am a maiden most forlorn?  
Christabel answered — Woe is me!  
She died the hour that I was born.  
I have heard the gray-haired friar tell  
How on her death-bed she did say,  
That she should hear the castle-bell  
Strike twelve upon my wedding-day.  
O mother dear! that thou wert here!  
I would, said Geraldine, she were!

But soon with altered voice, said she —  
"Off, wandering mother! Peak and pine!  
I have power to bid thee flee."  
Alas! what ails poor Geraldine?  
Why stares she with unsettled eye?  
Can she the bodiless dead espy?  
And why with hollow voice cries she,  
"Off, woman, off! this hour is mine —  
Though thou her guardian spirit be,  
Off, woman, off! 'tis given to me."

Then Christabel knelt by the lady's side,  
And raised to heaven her eyes so blue —  
Alas! said she, this ghastly ride —  
Dear lady! it hath wildered you!  
The lady wiped her moist cold brow,  
And faintly said, "'tis over now!"

Again the wild-flower wine she drank:  
Her fair large eyes 'gan glitter bright,  
And from the floor whereon she sank,  
The lofty lady stood upright:  
She was most beautiful to see,  
Like a lady of a far countrée.

And thus the lofty lady spake —  
"All they who live in the upper sky,  
Do love you, holy Christabel!  
And you love them, and for their sake  
And for the good which me befel,  
Even I in my degree will try,  
Fair maiden, to requite you well.  
But now unrobe yourself; for I  
Must pray, ere yet in bed I lie."

Quoth Christabel, So let it be!  
And as the lady bade, did she.  
Her gentle limbs did she undress,  
And lay down in her loveliness.

But through her brain of weal and woe  
So many thoughts moved to and fro,  
That vain it were her lids to close;  
So half-way from the bed she rose,  
And on her elbow did recline  
To look at the lady Geraldine.

Beneath the lamp the lady bowed,  
And slowly rolled her eyes around;  
Then drawing in her breath aloud,  
Like one that shuddered, she unbound  
The cincture from beneath her breast:  
Her silken robe, and inner vest,  
Dropt to her feet, and full in view,  
Behold! her bosom and half her side —  
A sight to dream of, not to tell!  
O shield her! shield sweet Christabel!

Yet Geraldine nor speaks nor stirs;  
Ah! what a stricken look was hers!  
Deep from within she seems half-way  
To lift some weight with sick assay,  
And eyes the maid and seeks delay;  
Then suddenly, as one defied,  
Collects herself in scorn and pride,  
And lay down by the Maiden's side! —  
And in her arms the maid she took,  
Ah wel-a-day!  
And with low voice and doleful look  
These words did say:  
"In the touch of this bosom there worketh  
a spell,  
Which is lord of thy utterance, Christa-  
bel!

Thou knowest to-night, and wilt know  
to-morrow,  
This mark of my shame, this seal of my  
sorrow;  
But vainly thou warrest,  
For this is alone in  
Thy power to declare,  
That in the dim forest  
Thou heard'st a low moaning,  
And found'st a bright lady, surpassingly  
fair;  
And didst bring her home with thee in love  
and in charity,  
To shield her and shelter her from the  
damp air."

## THE CONCLUSION TO PART THE FIRST

It was a lovely sight to see  
The lady Christabel, when she  
Was praying at the old oak tree.  
Amid the jagged shadows  
Of mossy leafless boughs,  
Kneeling in the moonlight,  
To make her gentle vows:  
Her slender palms together prest,  
Heaving sometimes on her breast;  
Her face resigned to bliss or bale —  
Her face, oh call it fair not pale,  
And both blue eyes more bright than clear,  
Each about to have a tear.

With open eyes (ah woe is me!)  
Asleep, and dreaming fearfully,  
Fearfully dreaming, yet, I wis,  
Dreaming sat alone, which is —  
O sorrow and shame! Can this be she,  
The lady, who knelt at the old oak tree?  
And lo! the worker of these harms,  
That holds the maiden in her arms,  
Seems to slumber still and mild,  
As a mother with her child.

A star hath set, a star hath risen,  
O Geraldine! since arms of thine  
Have been the lovely lady's prison.  
O Geraldine! one hour was thine —  
Thou'st had thy will! By tairn and rill,  
The night-birds all that hour were still,  
But now they are jubilant anew,  
From cliff and tower, tu — whoo! tu —  
whoo!  
Tu — whoo! tu — whoo! from wood and  
fell!

And see! the lady Christabel  
Gathers herself from out her trance;

Her limbs relax, her countenance  
Grows sad and soft; the smooth thin lids  
Close o'er her eyes! and tears she sheds —  
Large tears that leave the lashes bright!  
And oft the while she seems to smile  
As infants at a sudden light!

Yea, she doth smile, and she doth weep,  
Like a youthful hermitess,  
Beauteous in a wilderness,  
Who, praying always, prays in sleep.  
And, if she move unquietly,  
Perchance, 'tis but the blood so free  
Comes back and tingles in her feet.  
No doubt, she hath a vision sweet,  
What if her guardian spirit 'twere,  
What if she knew her mother near?  
But this she knows, in joys and woes,  
That saints will aid if men will call:  
For the blue sky bends over all!

1797. 1816.

## PART THE SECOND

Each matin bell, the Baron saith,  
Knells us back to a world of death.  
These words Sir Leoline first said,  
When he rose and found his lady dead:  
These words Sir Leoline will say  
Many a morn to his dying day!

And hence the custom and law began  
That still at dawn the sacristan,  
Who duly pulls the heavy bell,  
Five and forty beads must tell  
Between each stroke, — a warning knell,  
Which not a soul can choose but hear  
From Bratha Head to Wyndermere.

Saith Bracy the bard, So let it knell!  
And let the drowsy sacristan  
Still count as slowly as he can!  
There is no lack of such, I ween,  
As well fill up the space between.  
In Langdale Pike and Witch's Lair,  
And Dungeon-ghyll so foully rent,  
With ropes of rock and bells of air  
Three sinful sextons' ghosts are pent,  
Who all give back, one after t'other,  
The death-note to their living brother;  
And oft too, by the knell offended,  
Just as their one! two! three! is ended  
The devil mocks the doleful tale  
With a merry peal from Borrowdale.





And drew in her breath with a hissing  
sound :

Whereat the Knight turned wildly round,  
And nothing saw, but his own sweet maid  
With eyes upraised, as one that prayed.

The touch, the sight, had passed away,  
And in its stead that vision blest,  
Which comforted her after-rest,  
While in the lady's arms she lay,  
Had put a rapture in her breast,  
And on her lips and o'er her eyes  
Spread smiles like light !

With new surprise,  
"What ails then my beloved child?"  
The Baron said. — His daughter mild  
Made answer, "All will yet be well!"  
I ween, she had no power to tell  
Aught else : so mighty was the spell.

Yet he, who saw this Geraldine,  
Had deemed her sure a thing divine.  
Such sorrow with such grace she blended,  
As if she feared she had offended  
Sweet Christabel, that gentle maid !  
And with such lowly tones she prayed  
She might be sent without delay  
Home to her father's mansion.

"Nay !

Nay, by my soul !" said Leoline.  
"Ho ! Bracy the bard, the charge be thine !  
Go thou, with music sweet and loud,  
And take two steeds with trappings proud,  
And take the youth whom thou lov'st best  
To bear thy harp, and learn thy song,  
And clothe you both in solemn vest,  
And over the mountains haste along,  
Lest wandering folk, that are abroad,  
Detain you on the valley road.

"And when he has crossed the Irthing  
flood,  
My merry bard ! he hastes, he hastes  
Up Knorren Moor, through Halegarth  
Wood,  
And reaches soon that castle good  
Which stands and threatens Scotland's  
wastes.  
Bard Bracy ! bard Bracy ! your horses are  
fleet,  
Ye must ride up the hall, your music so  
sweet,  
More loud than your horses' echoing feet !  
And loud and loud to Lord Roland call,  
Thy daughter is safe in Langdale hall !  
Thy beautiful daughter is safe and free —

Sir Leoline greets thee thus through me.  
He bids thee come without delay  
With all thy numerous array ;  
And take thy lovely daughter home :  
And he will meet thee on the way  
With all his numerous array  
White with their panting palfreys' foam :  
And, by mine honor ! I will say,  
That I repent me of the day  
When I spake words of fierce disdain  
To Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine ! —  
— For since that evil hour hath flown,  
Many a summer's sun hath shone ;  
Yet ne'er found I a friend again  
Like Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine."

The lady fell, and clasped his knees,  
Her face upraised, her eyes o'erflowing ;  
And Bracy replied, with faltering voice,  
His gracious hail on all bestowing ;  
"Thy words, thou sire of Christabel,  
Are sweeter than my harp can tell ;  
Yet might I gain a boon of thee,  
This day my journey should not be,  
So strange a dream hath come to me :  
That I had vowed with music loud  
To clear yon wood from thing unblest,  
Warn'd by a vision in my rest !  
For in my sleep I saw that dove,  
That gentle bird, whom thou dost love,  
And call'st by thy own daughter's name —  
Sir Leoline ! I saw the same,  
Fluttering, and uttering fearful moan,  
Among the green herbs in the forest alone.  
Which when I saw and when I heard,  
I wonder'd what might ail the bird ;  
For nothing near it could I see,  
Save the grass and green herbs underneath  
the old tree.

"And in my dream, methought, I went  
To search out what might there be found ;  
And what the sweet bird's trouble meant,  
That thus lay fluttering on the ground.  
I went and peered, and could descry  
No cause for her distressful cry ;  
But yet for her dear lady's sake  
I stooped, methought, the dove to take,  
When lo ! I saw a bright green snake  
Coiled around its wings and neck.  
Green as the herbs on which it couched,  
Close by the dove's its head it crouched.  
And with the dove it heaves and stirs,  
Swelling its neck as she swelled hers !  
I woke ; it was the midnight hour,  
The clock was echoing in the tower ;

But though my slumber was gone by,  
This dream it would not pass away —  
It seems to live upon my eye!  
And thence I vowed this self-same day  
With music strong and saintly song  
To wander through the forest bare,  
Lest aught unholy loiter there."

Thus Bracy said: the Baron, the while,  
Half-listening heard him with a smile;  
Then turned to Lady Geraldine,  
His eyes made up of wonder and love;  
And said in courtly accents fine,  
"Sweet maid, Lord Roland's beauteous  
dove,

With arms more strong than harp of song,  
Thy sire and I will crush the snake!"

He kissed her forehead as he spake,  
And Geraldine in maiden wise  
Casting down her large bright eyes,  
With blushing cheek and courtesy fine  
She turned her from Sir Leoline;  
Softly gathering up her train,  
That o'er her right arm fell again;  
And folded her arms across her chest,  
And couched her head upon her breast,  
And looked askance at Christabel —  
Jesu, Maria, shield her well!

A snake's small eye blinks dull and shy,  
And the lady's eyes they shrunk in her  
head,

Each shrunk up to a serpent's eye,  
And with somewhat of malice, and more  
of dread,

At Christabel she look'd askance! —  
One moment — and the sight was fled!  
But Christabel in dizzy trance  
Stumbling on the unsteady ground  
Shuddered a'oud, with a hissing sound;  
And Geraldine again turned round,  
And like a thing, that sought relief,  
Full of wonder and full of grief,  
She rolled her large bright eyes divine  
Wildly on Sir Leoline.

The maid, alas! her thoughts are gone,  
She nothing sees — no sight but one!  
The maid, devoid of guile and sin,  
I know not how, in fearful wise,  
So deeply had she drunken in  
That look, those shrunken serpent eyes,  
That all her features were resigned  
To this sole image in her mind:  
And passively did imitate  
That look of dull and treacherous hate!

And thus she stood, in dizzy trance,  
Still picturing that look askance  
With forced unconscious sympathy  
Full before her father's view —  
As far as such a look could be  
In eyes so innocent and blue!

And when the trance was o'er, the maid  
Paused awhile, and inly prayed:  
Then falling at the Baron's feet,  
"By my mother's soul do I entreat  
That thou this woman send away!"  
She said: and more she could not say:  
For what she knew she could not tell,  
O'er-mastered by the mighty spell.

Why is thy cheek so wan and wild,  
Sir Leoline? Thy only child  
Lies at thy feet, thy joy, thy pride,  
So fair, so innocent, so mild;  
The same, for whom thy lady died!  
O, by the pangs of her dear mother,  
Think thou no evil of thy child!  
For her, and thee, and for no other,  
She prayed the moment ere she died:  
Prayed that the babe for whom she died  
Might prove her dear lord's joy and pride!

That prayer her deadly pangs beguiled,  
Sir Leoline!

And wouldst thou wrong thy only child,  
Her child and thine?

Within the Baron's heart and brain  
If thoughts, like these, had any share,  
They only swelled his rage and pain,  
And did but work confusion there.  
His heart was cleft with pain and rage,  
His cheeks they quivered, his eyes were  
wild,

Dishonor'd thus in his old age;  
Dishonor'd by his only child,  
And all his hospitality  
To the insulted daughter of his friend  
By more than woman's jealousy  
Brought thus to a disgraceful end —  
He rolled his eye with stern regard  
Upon the gentle minstrel bard,  
And said in tones abrupt, austere —  
"Why, Bracy! dost thou loiter here?  
I bade thee hence!" The bard obeyed;  
And turning from his own sweet maid,  
The aged knight, Sir Leoline,  
Led forth the lady Geraldine!

## THE CONCLUSION TO PART THE SECOND

A little child, a limber elf,  
 Singing, dancing to itself,  
 A fairy thing with red round cheeks,  
 That always finds, and never seeks,  
 Makes such a vision to the sight  
 As fills a father's eyes with light;  
 And pleasures flow in so thick and fast  
 Upon his heart, that he at last  
 Must needs express his love's excess  
 With words of unmeant bitterness.  
 Perhaps 'tis pretty to force together  
 Thoughts so all unlike each other;  
 To mutter and mock a broken charm,  
 To dally with wrong that does no harm.  
 Perhaps 'tis tender too and pretty  
 At each wild word to feel within  
 A sweet recoil of love and pity.  
 And what, if in a world of sin  
 (O sorrow and shame should this be true!)  
 Such giddiness of heart and brain  
 Comes seldom save from rage and pain,  
 So talks as it's most used to do.

? 1801. 1816.

## FRANCE: AN ODE

## I

YE Clouds! that far above me float and  
 pause,  
 Whose pathless march no mortal may  
 control!  
 Ye Ocean Waves! that, wheresoe'er  
 ye roll,  
 Yield homage only to eternal laws!  
 Ye Woods! that listen to the night-bird's  
 singing,  
 Midway the smooth and perilous slope  
 reclined,  
 Save when your own imperious branches  
 swinging,  
 Have made a solemn music of the wind!  
 Where, like a man beloved of God,  
 Through glooms, which never woodman  
 trod,  
 How oft, pursuing fancies holy,  
 My moonlight way o'er flowering weeds  
 I wound,  
 Inspired beyond the guess of folly,  
 By each rude shape and wild unconquer-  
 able sound!  
 O ye loud Waves! and O ye Forests  
 high!

And O ye Clouds that far above me  
 soared!  
 Thou rising sun! thou blue rejoicing Sky!  
 Yea, every thing that is and will be free!  
 Bear witness for me, wheresoe'er ye be,  
 With what deep worship I have still  
 adored  
 The spirit of divinest Liberty.

## II

When France in wrath her giant-limbs  
 upreared,  
 And with that oath which smote air,  
 earth, and sea,  
 Stamped her strong foot and said she  
 would be free,  
 Bear witness for me, how I hoped and  
 feared!  
 With what a joy my lofty gratulation  
 Unawed I sang, amid a slavish band:  
 And when to whelm the disenchanted  
 nation,  
 Like fiends embattled by a wizard's  
 wand,  
 The Monarchs marched in evil day,  
 And Britain join'd the dire array;  
 Though dear her shores and circling  
 ocean,  
 Though many friendships, many youth-  
 ful loves  
 Had swoln the patriot emotion  
 And flung a magic light o'er all her hills  
 and groves;  
 Yet still my voice, unaltered, sang defeat  
 To all that braved the tyrant-quelling  
 lance,  
 And shame too long delay'd and vain  
 retreat!  
 For ne'er, O Liberty! with partial aim  
 I dimmed thy light or damped thy holy  
 flame;  
 But blessed the pæns of delivered  
 France,  
 And hung my head and wept at Britain's  
 name.

## III

"And what," I said, "though Blasphemy's  
 loud scream  
 With that sweet music of deliverance  
 strove!  
 Though all the fierce and drunken  
 passions wove  
 A dance more wild than e'er was maniac's  
 dream!



Ye storms, that round the dawning  
east assembled,  
The Sun was rising, though ye hid his  
light!

And when to soothe my soul, that hoped  
and trembled,  
The dissonance ceased, and all seemed  
calm and bright;

When France her front deep-scarr'd and  
gory

Concealed with clustering wreaths of  
glory;

When insupportably advancing,  
Her arm made mockery of the warrior's  
ramp:

While timid looks of fury glancing,  
Domestic treason, crushed beneath her  
fatal stamp,

Writhed like a wounded dragon in his gore;  
Then I reproached my fears that would  
not flee;

"And soon," I said, "shall Wisdom teach  
her lore

In the lowhuts of them that toil and groan;  
And, conquering by her happiness alone,  
Shall France compel the nations to be  
free,

Till Love and Joy look round, and call  
the earth their own."

## IV

Forgive me, Freedom! O forgive those  
dreams!

I hear thy voice, I hear thy loud lament,  
From bleak Helvetia's icy caverns sent—  
I hear thy groans upon her blood-stained  
streams!

Heroes, that for your peaceful country  
perished,

And ye, that fleeing, spot your mountain  
snows

With bleeding wounds; forgive me,  
that I cherished

One thought that ever blessed your cruel  
foes!

To scatter rage and traitorous guilt  
Where Peace her jealous home had built;

A patriot-race to disinherit  
Of all that made their stormy wilds so  
dear;

And with inexpressible spirit  
To taint the bloodless freedom of the  
mountaineer—

O France, that mockest Heaven, adul-  
terous, blind,

And patriot only in pernicious toils!

Are these thy boasts, Champion of human  
kind?

To mix with Kings in the low lust of  
sway,

Yell in the hunt, and share the murder-  
ous prey;

To insult the shrine of Liberty with spoils  
From freemen torn; to tempt and to  
betray?

## V

The Sensual and the Dark rebel in  
vain,

Slaves by their own compulsion! In  
mad game

They burst their manacles and wear  
the name

Of Freedom, graven on a heavier  
chain!

O Liberty! with profitless endeavor  
Have I pursued thee, many a weary hour;  
But thou nor swell'st the victor's strain  
nor ever

Didst breathe thy soul in forms of human  
power.

Alike from all, howe'er they praise thee,  
(Nor prayer, nor boastful name delays  
thee)

Alike from Priestcraft's harpy  
minions,

And factious Blasphemy's obscener  
slaves,

Thou speedest on thy subtle pinions,  
The guide of homeless winds, and play-  
mate of the waves!

And then I felt thee!—on that sea-cliff's  
verge,

Whose pines, scarce travelled by the  
breeze above,

Had made one murmur with the distant  
surge!

Yes, while I stood and gazed, my temples  
bare,

And shot my being through earth, sea, and  
air,

Possessing all things with intensest love,  
O Liberty! my spirit felt thee there.

*February, 1798. April 16, 1798.*

## FROST AT MIDNIGHT

THE Frost performs its secret ministry,  
Unhelped by any wind. The owl's cry  
Came loud—and hark, again! loud as  
before.



The inmates of my cottage, all at rest,  
Have left me to that solitude, which suits  
Abstruser musings: save that at my side  
My cradled infant slumbers peacefully.  
'Tis calm indeed! so calm, that it disturbs

And vexes meditation with its strange  
And extreme silentness. Sea, hill, and wood,

This populous village! Sea, and hill, and wood,

With all the numberless goings-on of life,  
Inaudible as dreams! the thin blue flame  
Lies on my low-burnt fire, and quivers not;  
Only that film, which fluttered on the grate,

Still flutters there, the sole unquiet thing.  
Methinks, its motion in this hush of nature

Gives it dim sympathies with me who live,  
Making it a companionable form,  
Whose puny flaps and freaks the idling Spirit

By its own moods interprets, everywhere  
Echo or mirror seeking of itself,  
And makes a toy of Thought.

But O! how oft,  
How oft, at school, with most believing mind,

Presageful, have I gazed upon the bars,  
To watch that fluttering *stranger*! and as oft

With unclosed lids, already had I dreamt  
Of my sweet birth-place, and the old church-tower,

Whose bells the poor man's only music rang

From morn to evening, all the hot Fairday,  
So sweetly, that they stirred and haunted me

With a wild pleasure, falling on mine ear  
Most like articulate sounds of things to come!

So gazed I, till the soothing things, I dreamt,

Lulled me to sleep, and sleep prolonged my dreams!

And so I boded all the following morn,  
Awed by the stern preceptor's face, mine eye

Fixed with mock study on my swimming book:

Save if the door half opened, and I snatched

A hasty glance, and still my heart leaped up,

For still I hoped to see the *stranger's* face,  
Townsmen, or aunt, or sister more beloved,

My play-mate when we both were clothed alike!

Dear Babe, that sleepest cradled by my side,

Whose gentle breathings, heard in this deep calm,

Fill up the interspersed vacancies  
And momentary pauses of the thought!

My babe so beautiful! it thrills my heart

With tender gladness, thus to look at thee,

And think that thou shalt learn far other lore,

And in far other scenes! For I was reared

In the great city, pent 'mid cloisters dim,

And saw nought lovely but the sky and stars.

But *thou*, my babe! shalt wander like a breeze

By lakes and sandy shores, beneath the crags

Of ancient mountain, and beneath the clouds,

Which image in their bulk both lakes and shores

And mountain crags: so shalt thou see and hear

The lovely shapes and sounds intelligible  
Of that eternal language, which thy God

Utters, who from eternity doth teach  
Himself in all, and all things in himself.

Great universal Teacher! he shall mould  
Thy spirit, and by giving make it ask.

Therefore all seasons shall be sweet to thee,

Whether the summer clothe the general earth

With greenness, or the redbreast sit and sing

Betwixt the tufts of snow on the bare branch

Of mossy apple-tree, while the nigh thatch  
Smokes in the sun-thaw; whether the

eave-drops fall

Heard only in the trances of the blast,  
Or if the secret ministry of frost

Shall hang them up in silent icicles,  
Quietly shining to the quiet Moon.

February, 1798. 1798

## LOVE

ALL thoughts, all passions, all delights,  
 Whatever stirs this mortal frame,  
 All are but ministers of Love,  
 And feed his sacred flame.

Oft in my waking dreams do I  
 Live o'er again that happy hour,  
 When midway on the mount I lay,  
 Beside the ruined tower.

The moonshine, stealing o'er the scene  
 Had blended with the lights of eve;  
 And she was there, my hope, my joy,  
 My own dear Genevieve!

She leant against the armed man,  
 The statue of the armed knight;  
 She stood and listened to my lay,  
 Amid the lingering light.

Few sorrows hath she of her own,  
 My hope! my joy! my Genevieve!  
 She loves me best, when'er I sing  
 The songs that make her grieve.

I played a soft and doleful air,  
 I sang an old and moving story —  
 An old rude song, that suited well  
 That ruin wild and hoary.

She listened with a flitting blush,  
 With downcast eyes and modest grace;  
 For well she knew, I could not choose  
 But gaze upon her face.

I told her of the Knight that wore  
 Upon his shield a burning brand;  
 And that for ten long years he wooed  
 The Lady of the Land.

I told her how he pined: and ah!  
 The deep, the low, the pleading tone  
 With which I sang another's love,  
 Interpreted my own.

She listened with a flitting blush,  
 With downcast eyes, and modest grace;  
 And she forgave me, that I gazed  
 Too fondly on her face!

But when I told the cruel scorn  
 That crazed that bold and lovely Knight,  
 And that he crossed the mountain-woods,  
 Nor rested day nor night;

That sometimes from the savage den,  
 And sometimes from the darksome shade  
 And sometimes starting up at once  
 In green and sunny glade, —

There came and looked him in the face  
 An angel beautiful and bright;  
 And that he knew it was a Fiend,  
 This miserable Knight!

And that unknowing what he did,  
 He leaped amid a murderous band,  
 And saved from outrage worse than death  
 The Lady of the Land!

And how she wept, and clasped his knees;  
 And how she tended him in vain —  
 And ever strove to expiate  
 The scorn that crazed his brain; —

And that she nursed him in a cave;  
 And how his madness went away,  
 When on the yellow forest-leaves  
 A dying man he lay; —

His dying words — but when I reached  
 That tenderest strain of all the ditty,  
 My faltering voice and pausing harp  
 Disturbed her soul with pity!

All impulses of soul and sense  
 Had thrilled my guileless Genevieve;  
 The music and the doleful tale,  
 The rich and balmy eve;

And hopes, and fears that kindle hope,  
 An undistinguishable throng,  
 And gentle wishes long subdued,  
 Subdued and cherished long!

She wept with pity and delight,  
 She blushed with love, and virgin-shame:  
 And like the murmur of a dream,  
 I heard her breathe my name.

Her bosom heaved — she stepped aside,  
 As conscious of my look she stepped —  
 Then suddenly, with timorous eye  
 She fled to me and wept.

She half enclosed me with her arms,  
 She pressed me with a meek embrace:  
 And bending back her head, looked up,  
 And gazed upon my face.

'Twas partly love, and partly fear,  
And partly 'twas a bashful art,  
That I might rather feel, than see,  
The swelling of her heart.

I calmed her fears, and she was calm,  
And told her love with virgin pride;  
And so I won my Genevieve,  
My bright and beauteous Bride.  
1798-1799. December 21, 1799.

## THE BALLAD OF THE DARK LADIÉ

### A FRAGMENT

BENEATH yon birch with silver bark,  
And boughs so pendulous and fair,  
The brook falls scatter'd down the rock :  
And all is mossy there !

And there upon the moss she sits,  
The Dark Ladié in silent pain ;  
The heavy tear is in her eye,  
And drops and swells again.

Three times she sends her little page  
Up the castled mountain's breast,  
If he might find the Knight that wears  
The Griffin for his crest.

The sun was sloping down the sky,  
And she had linger'd there all day,  
Counting moments, dreaming fears —  
Oh wherefore can he stay ?

She hears a rustling o'er the brook,  
She sees far off a swinging bough !  
" 'Tis He ! 'Tis my betrothed Knight !  
Lord Falkland, it is Thou ! "

She springs, she clasps him round the neck,  
She sobs a thousand hopes and fears,  
Her kisses glowing on his cheeks  
She quenches with her tears.

\* \* \* \*

" My friends with rude ungentle words  
They scoff and bid me fly to thee !  
O give me shelter in thy breast !  
O shield and shelter me !

" My Henry, I have given thee much,  
I gave what I can ne'er recall.  
I gave my heart, I gave my peace,  
O Heaven ! I gave thee all. "

The Knight made answer to the Maid,  
While to his heart he held her hand,  
" Nine castles hath my noble sire,  
None statelier in the land.

" The fairest one shall be my love's,  
The fairest castle of the nine !  
Wait only till the stars peep out,  
The fairest shall be thine :

" Wait only till the hand of eve  
Hath wholly closed yon western bars,  
And through the dark we two will steal  
Beneath the twinkling stars ! " —

" The dark ? the dark ? No ! not the dark !  
The twinkling stars ? How, Henry ? How ?  
O God ! 'twas in the eye of noon  
He pledged his sacred vow !

" And in the eye of noon my love  
Shall lead me from my mother's door,  
Sweet boys and girls all clothed in white  
Strewing flowers before :

" But first the nodding minstrels go  
With music meet for lordly bowers,  
The children next in snow-white vests,  
Strewing buds and flowers !

" And then my love and I shall pace,  
My jet black hair in pearly braids,  
Between our comely bachelors  
And blushing bridal maids. "

\* \* \* \*

1798. 1834.

## LINES

WRITTEN IN THE ALBUM AT ELBINGERODE,  
IN THE HARTZ FOREST

I STOOD on Brocken's sovran height, and  
saw  
Woods crowding upon woods, hills over  
hills,

A surging scene, and only limited  
By the blue distance. Heavily my way  
Downward I dragged through fir groves  
evermore,

Where bright green moss heaves in  
sepulchral forms

Speckled with sunshine ; and, but seldom  
heard,  
The sweet bird's song became an hollow  
sound :

And the breeze, murmuring indivisibly,  
Preserved its solemn murmur most distinct

From many a note of many a waterfall,  
And the brook's chatter; 'mid whose  
islet-stones

The dingy kidling with its tinkling bell  
Leaped frolicsome, or old romantic goat  
Sat, his white beard slow waving. I  
moved on

In low and languid mood: for I had  
found

That outward forms, the loftiest, still  
receive

Their finer influence from the Life  
within;—

Fair cyphers else: fair, but of import  
vague

Or unconcerning, where the heart not  
finds

History or prophecy of friend, or child,  
Or gentle maid, our first and early love,  
Or father, or the venerable name  
Of our adored country! O thou Queen,  
Thou delegated Deity of Earth,  
O dear, dear England! how my longing  
eye

Turned westward, shaping in the steady  
clouds

Thy sands and high white cliffs!

My native Land!

Filled with the thought of thee this heart  
was proud,

Yea, mine eye swam with tears: that  
all the view

From sovran Brocken, woods and woody  
hills,

Floated away, like a departing dream,  
Feeble and dim! Stranger, these im-  
pulses

Blame thou not lightly; nor will I pro-  
fane,

With hasty judgment or injurious doubt,  
That man's sublimer spirit, who can feel  
That God is everywhere! the God who  
framed

Mankind to be one mighty family,  
Himself our Father, and the World our  
Home.

*May 17, 1799. September 17, 1799.*

## ODE TO TRANQUILLITY

TRANQUILLITY! thou better name  
Than all the family of Fame!

Thou ne'er wilt leave my riper age  
To low intrigue, or factious rage;  
For oh! dear child of thoughtful  
Truth,

To thee I gave my early youth,  
And left the bark, and blest the stead-  
fast shore,

Ere yet the tempest rose and scared me  
with its roar.

Who late and lingering seeks thy  
shrine,

On him but seldom, Power divine,

Thy spirit rests! Satiety

And Sloth, poor counterfeits of thee,

Mock the tired worldling. Idle Hope

And dire Remembrance interlope,

To vex the feverish slumbers of the mind:  
The bubble floats before, the spectre stalks  
behind.

But me thy gentle hand will lead

At morning through the accustomed  
mead:

And in the sultry summer's heat

Will build me up a mossy seat;

And when the gust of Autumn crowds,

And breaks the busy moonlight  
clouds,

Thou best the thought canst raise, the  
heart attune,

Light as the busy clouds, calm as the  
gliding moon.

The feeling heart, the searching soul,  
To thee I dedicate the whole!

And while within myself I trace

The greatness of some future race,

Aloof with hermit-eye I scan

The present works of present man—

A wild and dream-like trade of blood and  
guile,

Too foolish for a tear, too wicked for a  
smile!

*1801. December 4, 1801.*

## DEJECTION: AN ODE<sup>1</sup>

Late, late yestreen I saw the new Moon,

With the old Moon in her arms;

And I fear, I fear, my master dear!

We shall have a deadly storm.

*Ballad of Sir Patrick Spence.*

<sup>1</sup> This Ode was originally written to William Wordsworth, who was addressed as "Edmund" in the poem when first printed, on the day of Wordsworth's marriage, October 4, 1802. In that copy,

## I

WELL! If the Bard was weather-wise,  
 who made  
 The grand old ballad of Sir Patrick  
 Spence,  
 This night, so tranquil now, will not  
 go hence  
 Unroused by winds, that ply a busier  
 trade  
 Than those which mould yon cloud in  
 lazy flakes,  
 Or the dull sobbing draft, that moans  
 and rakes

Upon the strings of this Æolian lute,  
 Which better far were mute.

For lo! the New-moon winter-bright!  
 And overspread with phantom light,  
 (With swimming phantom light o'er-  
 spread

But rimmed and circled by a silver  
 thread)

I see the old Moon in her lap, foretelling  
 The coming-on of rain and squally  
 blast,

And oh! that even now the gust were  
 swelling,

And the slant night-shower driving loud  
 and fast!

Those sounds which oft have raised me,  
 whilst they awed,

And sent my soul abroad,  
 Might now perhaps their wonted impulse  
 give,

Might startle this dull pain, and make it  
 move and live!

## II

A grief without a pang, void, dark, and  
 drear,

A stifled, drowsy, unimpassioned grief,  
 Which finds no natural outlet, no re-  
 lief,

In word, or sigh, or tear —

O Lady! in this wan and heartless mood,  
 To other thoughts by yonder throistle  
 woo'd,

All this long eve, so balmy and serene,  
 Have I been gazing on the western sky,  
 And its peculiar tint of yellow green;

---

the name "Edmund" occurs at every point where  
 "Lady" is found in the later versions and also  
 where the name "Otway" occurs, in the seventh  
 stanza; there is a corresponding difference of the  
 personal pronouns, and some other slight differences  
 of text, the most important of which is in the con-  
 clusion, as noted below.

And still I gaze — and with how blank  
 an eye!

And those thin clouds above, in flakes  
 and bars,

That give away their motion to the stars;  
 Those stars, that glide behind them or  
 between,

Now sparkling, now bedimmed but al-  
 ways seen;

Yon crescent Moon, as fixed as if it grew  
 In its own cloudless, starless lake of blue;  
 I see them all so excellently fair,  
 I see, not feel, how beautiful they are!

## III

My genial spirits fail;

And what can these avail

To lift the smothering weight from off  
 my breast?

It were a vain endeavor,

Though I should gaze for ever

On that green light that lingers in the  
 west;

I may not hope from outward forms to  
 win

The passion and the life, whose fountains  
 are within.

## IV

O Lady! we receive but what we give,  
 And in our life alone does Nature live;  
 Ours is her wedding-garment, ours her  
 shroud!

And would we aught behold, of higher  
 worth,

Than that inanimate cold world allowed  
 To the poor loveless ever-anxious crowd,

Ah! from the soul itself must issue  
 forth

A light, a glory, a fair luminous cloud  
 Enveloping the Earth —

And from the soul itself must there be  
 sent

A sweet and potent voice, of its own  
 birth,

Of all sweet sounds the life and element!

## V

O pure of heart! thou need'st not ask  
 of me

What this strong music in the soul may  
 be!

What, and wherein it doth exist,

This light, this glory, this fair luminous  
 mist,

This beautiful and beauty-making power.



Joy, virtuous Lady! Joy that ne'er  
 was given,  
 Save to the pure, and in their purest hour,  
 Life, and Life's effluence, cloud at once  
 and shower,  
 Joy, Lady! is the spirit and the power,  
 Which wedding Nature to us gives in  
 dower,  
 A new Earth and new Heaven,  
 Undreamt of by the sensual and the  
 proud —  
 Joy is the sweet voice, Joy the luminous  
 cloud —  
 We in ourselves rejoice!  
 And thence flows all that charms our ear  
 or sight,  
 All melodies the echoes of that voice,  
 All colors a suffusion from that light.

## VI

There was a time when, though my path  
 was rough,  
 This joy within me dallied with distress,  
 And all misfortunes were but as the stuff  
 Whence Fancy made me dreams of  
 happiness:  
 For hope grew round me, like the twining  
 vine,  
 And fruits, and foliage, not my own,  
 seemed mine.  
 But now afflictions bow me down to  
 earth:  
 Nor care I that they rob me of my mirth;  
 But oh! each visitation  
 Suspends what nature gave me at my  
 birth,  
 My shaping spirit of Imagination.  
 For not to think of what I needs must  
 feel,  
 But to be still and patient, all I can;  
 And haply by abstruse research to steal  
 From my own nature all the natural  
 man —  
 This was my sole resource, my only plan;  
 Till that which suits a part infects the  
 whole,  
 And now is almost grown the habit of  
 my soul.

## VII

Hence, viper thoughts, that coil around  
 my mind,  
 Reality's dark dream!  
 I turn from you, and listen to the wind,  
 Which long has raved unnoticed.  
 What a scream

Of agony by torture lengthened out  
 That lute sent forth! Thou Wind, that  
 rav'st without,  
 Bare crag, or mountain-tairn, or blasted  
 tree,  
 Or pine-grove whither woodman never  
 clomb,  
 Or lonely house, long held the witches'  
 home,  
 Methinks were fitter instruments for  
 thee,  
 Mad Lutanist! who in this month of  
 showers,  
 Of dark-brown gardens, and of peeping  
 flowers,  
 Mak'st Devils' yule, with worse than  
 wintry song,  
 The blossoms, buds, and timorous leaves  
 among.  
 Thou Actor, perfect in all tragic sounds!  
 Thou mighty Poet, even to frenzy bold!  
 What tell'st thou now about?  
 'Tis of the rushing of an host in rout,  
 With groans of trampled men, with  
 smarting wounds —  
 At once they groan with pain, and  
 shudder with the cold!  
 But hush! there is a pause of deepest  
 silence!  
 And all that noise, as of a rushing  
 crowd,  
 With groans, and tremulous shudderings  
 — all is over —  
 It tells another tale, with sounds less  
 deep and loud!  
 A tale of less affright,  
 And tempered with delight,  
 As Otway's<sup>1</sup> self had framed the tender  
 lay.  
 'Tis of a little child  
 Upon a lonesome wild,  
 Not far from home, but she hath lost her  
 way;  
 And now moans low in bitter grief and  
 fear,  
 And now screams loud, and hopes to  
 make her mother hear.

## VIII

'Tis midnight, but small thoughts have  
 I of sleep:  
 Full seldom may my friend such vigils  
 keep!

<sup>1</sup> In the first printed copy, *Edmund's*, referring to Wordsworth. The following lines are evidently an allusion to Wordsworth's "Lucy Gray."

Visit her, gentle Sleep! with wings of  
 healing,  
 And may this storm be but a moun-  
 tain-birth,  
 May all the stars hang bright above her  
 dwelling,  
 Silent as though they watched the  
 sleeping Earth!  
 With light heart may she rise,<sup>1</sup>  
 Gay fancy, cheerful eyes,  
 Joy lift her spirit, joy attune her  
 voice;  
 To her may all things live, from pole to  
 pole,  
 Their life the eddying of her living soul!  
 O simple spirit, guided from above,  
 Dear Lady! friend devoutest of my  
 choice,  
 Thus mayest thou ever, evermore rejoice.  
*April 4, 1802. October 4, 1802.*

#### HYMN BEFORE SUNRISE, IN THE VALE OF CHAMOUNI

Besides the Rivers Arve and Arveiron, which  
 have their sources in the foot of Mont Blanc, five  
 conspicuous torrents rush down its sides; and with-  
 in a few paces of the glaciers the Gentiana Major  
 grows in immense numbers, with its "flowers of  
 loveliest blue." (*Coleridge.*)

HAST thou a charm to stay the morning-  
 star  
 In his steep course? So long he seems  
 to pause  
 On thy bald awful head, O sovran  
 BLANC!  
 The Arve and Arveiron at thy base  
 Rave ceaselessly; but thou, most awful  
 Form!  
 Risest from forth thy silent sea of pines,  
 How silently! Around thee and above  
 Deep is the air and dark, substantial,  
 black,

<sup>1</sup> The conclusion is as follows in the first printed  
 copy:

With light heart may he rise,  
 Gay fancy, cheerful eyes,  
 And sing his lofty song, and teach me to rejoice!  
 O EDMUND, friend of my devoutest choice,  
 O rais'd from anxious dread and busy care,  
 By the immenseness of the good and fair  
 Which thou see'st everywhere,  
 Joy lifts thy spirit, joy attunes thy voice,  
 To thee do all things live from pole to pole,  
 Their life the eddying of thy living soul  
 O simple spirit, guided from above,  
 O lofty Poet, full of life and love,  
 Brother and friend of my devoutest choice  
 Thus may'st Thou ever, evermore rejoice!

An ebon mass: methinks thou piercest it,  
 As with a wedge! But when I look again,  
 It is thine own calm home, thy crystal  
 shrine,  
 Thy habitation from eternity!  
 O dread and silent Mount! I gazed upon  
 thee,  
 Till thou, still present to the bodily  
 sense,  
 Didst vanish from my thought: en-  
 tranced in prayer  
 I worshipped the Invisible alone.

Yet, like some sweet beguiling melody,  
 So sweet, we know not we are listening  
 to it,  
 Thou, the meanwhile, wast blending  
 with my Thought,  
 Yea, with my Life and Life's own secret  
 joy;  
 Till the dilating Soul, enrapt, transfused,  
 Into the mighty vision passing—there  
 As in her natural form, swelled vast to  
 Heaven!

Awake, my soul! not only passive  
 praise  
 Thou owest! not alone these swelling  
 tears,  
 Mute thanks and secret ecstasy! Awake,  
 Voice of sweet song! Awake, my heart,  
 awake!  
 Green vales and icy cliffs, all join my  
 Hymn.

Thou first and chief, sole sovereign of  
 the Vale!  
 O struggling with the darkness all the  
 night,  
 And visited all night by troops of stars,  
 Or when they climb the sky or when  
 they sink:  
 Companion of the morning-star at dawn,  
 Thyself Earth's rosy star, and of the dawn  
 Co-herald: wake, O wake, and utter  
 praise!  
 Who sank thy sunless pillars deep in  
 Earth?  
 Who fill'd thy countenance with rosy light?  
 Who made thee parent of perpetual  
 streams?

And you, ye five wild torrents fiercely  
 glad!  
 Who called you forth from night and  
 utter death,

From dark and icy caverns called you  
 forth,  
 Down those precipitous, black, jagged  
 rocks,  
 For ever shattered and the same for ever?  
 Who gave you your invulnerable life,  
 Your strength, your speed, your fury, and  
 your joy,  
 Unceasing thunder and eternal foam?  
 And who commanded (and the silence  
 came),  
 Here let the billows stiffen, and have rest?

Ye Ice-falls! ye that from the moun-  
 tain's brow  
 Adown enormous ravines slope amain —  
 Torrents, methinks, that heard a mighty  
 voice,  
 And stopped at once amid their maddest  
 plunge!  
 Motionless torrents! silent cataracts!  
 Who made you glorious as the Gates of  
 Heaven  
 Beneath the keen full moon? Who bade  
 the sun  
 Clothe you with rainbows? Who, with  
 living flowers  
 Of loveliest blue, spread garlands at  
 your feet? —  
 God! let the torrents, like a shout of  
 nations,  
 Answer! and let the ice-plains echo, God!  
 God! sing ye meadow-streams, with  
 gladsome voice!  
 Ye pine-groves, with your soft and soul-  
 like sounds!  
 And they too have a voice, yon piles of  
 snow,  
 And in their perilous fall shall thunder,  
 God!

Ye living flowers that skirt the eternal  
 frost!  
 Ye wild goats sporting round the eagle's  
 nest!  
 Ye eagles, play-mates of the mountain-  
 storm!  
 Ye lightnings, the dread arrows of the  
 clouds!  
 Ye signs and wonders of the element!  
 Utter forth God, and fill the hills with  
 praise!

Thou too, hoar Mount! with thy sky-  
 pointing peaks,  
 Oft from whose feet the avalanche, un-  
 heard,

Shoots downward, glittering through the  
 pure serene  
 Into the depth of clouds, that veil thy  
 breast —  
 Thou too again, stupendous Mountain!  
 thou  
 That as I raise my head, awhile bowed low  
 In adoration, upward from thy base  
 Slow travelling with dim eyes suffused  
 with tears,  
 Solemnly seemest, like a vapory cloud,  
 To rise before me — Rise, O ever rise,  
 Rise like a cloud of incense from the  
 Earth!  
 Thou kingly Spirit throned among the  
 hills,  
 Thou dread ambassador from Earth to  
 Heaven,  
 Great Hierarch! tell thou the silent sky,  
 And tell the stars, and tell yon rising sun  
 Earth, with her thousand voices, praises  
 God.

1802. September 11, 1802.

#### THE GOOD, GREAT MAN

"How seldom, friend! a good great man  
 inherits  
 Honor or wealth with all his worth  
 and pains!  
 It sounds like stories from the land of  
 spirits  
 If any man obtain that which he merits  
 Or any merit that which he obtains."

#### REPLY TO THE ABOVE

FOR shame, dear friend, renounce this  
 canting strain!  
 What would'st thou have a good great  
 man obtain?  
 Place? titles? salary? a gilded chain?  
 Or throne of corpses which his sword had  
 slain?  
 Greatness and goodness are not *means*,  
 but *ends*!  
 Hath he not always treasures, always  
 friends,  
 The good great man? *three* treasures,  
 LOVE, and LIGHT,  
 And CALM THOUGHTS, regular as infant's  
 breath:  
 And three firm friends, more sure than  
 day and night,  
 HIMSELF, his MAKER, and the ANGEL  
 DEATH!

1802. September 23, 1802.

## THE PAINS OF SLEEP

ERE on my bed my limbs I lay,  
 It hath not been my use to pray  
 With moving lips or bended knees;  
 But silently, by slow degrees,  
 My spirit I to Love compose,  
 In humble trust mine eyelids close,  
 With reverential resignation,  
 No wish conceived, no thought exprest,  
 Only a *sense* of supplication;  
 A sense o'er all my soul imprest  
 That I am weak, yet not unblest,  
 Since in me, round me, everywhere  
 Eternal Strength and Wisdom are.

But yester-night I pray'd aloud  
 In anguish and in agony,  
 Up-starting from the fiendish crowd  
 Of shapes and thoughts that tortured me:  
 A lurid light, a trampling throng,  
 Sense of intolerable wrong,  
 And whom I scorned, those only strong!  
 Thirst of revenge, the powerless will  
 Still baffled, and yet burning still!  
 Desire with loathing strangely mixed  
 On wild or hateful objects fixed.  
 Fantastic passions! maddening brawl!  
 And shame and terror over all!  
 Deeds to be hid which were not hid,  
 Which all confused I could not know  
 Whether I suffered, or I did:  
 For all seem'd guilt, remorse or woe,  
 My own or others still the same  
 Life-stifling fear, soul-stifling shame!

So two nights passed: the night's dismay  
 Saddened and stunned the coming day.  
 Sleep, the wide blessing, seemed to me  
 Distemper's worst calamity.  
 The third night, when my own loud scream  
 Had waked me from the fiendish dream  
 O'ercome with sufferings strange and wild,  
 I wept as I had been a child:  
 And having thus by tears subdued  
 My anguish to a milder mood,  
 Such punishments, I said, were due  
 To natures deepliest stained with sin:  
 For aye entempesting anew  
 The unfathomable hell within  
 The horror of their deeds to view,  
 To know and loathe, yet wish and do!  
 Such griefs with such men well agree,  
 But wherefore, wherefore fall on me?  
 To be beloved is all I need,  
 And whom I love, I love indeed.

1803. 1816.

## TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

COMPOSED ON THE NIGHT AFTER HIS RECI-  
 TATION OF A POEM ON THE GROWTH OF  
 AN INDIVIDUAL MIND

FRIEND of the wise! and Teacher of the  
 Good!  
 Into my heart have I received that Lay  
 More than historic, that prophetic Lay  
 Wherein (high theme by thee first sung  
 aright)  
 Of the foundations and the building up  
 Of a Human Spirit thou hast dared to  
 tell  
 What may be told, to the understanding  
 mind  
 Revealable; and what within the mind  
 By vital breathings secret as the soul  
 Of vernal growth, oft quickens in the  
 heart  
 Thoughts all too deep for words!—

Theme hard as high!  
 Of smiles spontaneous, and mysterious  
 fears  
 (The first-born they of Reason and twin-  
 birth),  
 Of tides obedient to external force,  
 And currents self-determined, as might  
 seem,  
 Or by some inner Power; of moments  
 awful,  
 Now in thy inner life, and now abroad,  
 When power streamed from thee, and  
 thy soul received  
 The light reflected, as a light bestowed—  
 Of fancies fair, and milder hours of youth,  
 Hyblean murmurs of poetic thought  
 Industrious in its joy, in vales and glens  
 Native or outland, lakes and famous  
 hills!  
 Or on the lonely high-road, when the  
 stars  
 Were rising; or by secret mountain-  
 streams,  
 The guides and the companions of thy  
 way!

Of more than Fancy, of the Social Sense  
 Distending wide, and man beloved as  
 man,  
 Where France in all her towns lay vibrat-  
 ing  
 Like some becalmed bark beneath the  
 burst

Of Heaven's immediate thunder, when  
 no cloud  
 Is visible, or shadow on the main.  
 For thou wert there, thine own brows  
 garlanded,  
 Amid the tremor of a realm aglow,  
 Amid a mighty nation jubilant,  
 When from the general heart of human-  
 kind  
 Hope sprang forth like a full-born Deity!  
 — Of that dear Hope afflicted and  
 struck down,  
 So summoned homeward, thenceforth  
 calm and sure  
 From the dread watch-tower of man's  
 absolute self  
 With light unwaning on her eyes, to look  
 Far on — herself a glory to behold,  
 The angel of the vision! Then (last  
 strain)  
 Of Duty, chosen Laws controlling choice,  
 Action and joy! — An orphic song indeed,  
 A song divine of high and passionate  
 thoughts  
 To their own music chanted!

O great Bard!

Ere yet that last strain dying awed the air,  
 With steadfast eye I viewed thee in the  
 choir  
 Of ever-enduring men. The truly great  
 Have all one age, and from one visible  
 space  
 Shed influence! They, both in power  
 and act,  
 Are permanent, and Time is not with *them*,  
 Save as it worketh *for* them, they *in* it.  
 Nor less a sacred Roll than those of old,  
 And to be placed, as they, with gradual  
 fame  
 Among the archives of mankind, thy work  
 Makes audible a linked lay of Truth,  
 Of Truth profound a sweet continuous lay,  
 Not learnt, but native, her own natural  
 notes!

<sup>1</sup> Ah! as I listen'd with a heart forlorn,

<sup>1</sup> In place of this line and the next, there stood in the manuscript copy of January 1807 the following lines:

Dear shall it be to every human heart,  
 To me how more than dearest! me, on whom  
 Comfort from thee, and utterance of thy love,  
 Came with such heights and depths of harmony,  
 Such sense of wings uplifting, that its might  
 Scatter'd and quell'd me, till my thoughts became  
 A bodily tumult; and thy faithful hopes,  
 Thy hopes of me, dear Friend, by me unfelt!  
 Were troublous to me, almost as a voice,

The pulses of my being beat anew:  
 And even as life returns upon the  
 drowned,  
 Life's joy rekindling roused a throng of  
 pains —  
 Keen pangs of Love, awakening as a babe  
 Turbulent, with an outcry in the heart;  
 And fears self-willed, that shunned the  
 eye of hope;  
 And hope that scarce would know itself  
 from fear;  
 Sense of past youth, and manhood come  
 in vain,  
 And genius given, and knowledge won in  
 vain;  
 And all which I had culled in wood-  
 walks wide,  
 And all which patient toil had reared,  
 and all  
 Commune with *thee* had opened out —  
 but flowers  
 Strew'd on my corse, and borne upon  
 my bier,  
 In the same coffin, for the self-same  
 grave!

That way no more! and ill beseems  
 it me,  
 Who came a welcomer in herald's guise,  
 Singing of glory, and futurity,  
 To wander back on such unhealthful  
 road,  
 Plucking the poisons of self-harm! And  
 ill  
 Such intertwine beseems triumphal  
 wreaths  
 Strew'd before *thy* advancing!

Nor do thou,  
 Sage Bard! impair the memory of that  
 hour  
 Of thy communion with my nobler  
 mind  
 By pity or grief, already felt too long!  
 Nor let my words import more blame  
 than needs.  
 The tumult rose and ceased: for Peace  
 is nigh  
 Where wisdom's voice has found a  
 listening heart.

---

Familiar once, and more than musical;  
 As a dear woman's voice to one cast forth,  
 A wanderer with a worn-out heart forlorn,  
 Mid strangers pining with untended wounds.  
 O Friend, too well thou know'st, of what sad years  
 The long suppression had benumb'd my soul. . . .



Amid the howl of more than wintry  
storms,  
The halcyon hears the voice of vernal  
hours  
Already on the wing.

Eve following eve,  
Dear tranquil time, when the sweet sense  
of Home

Is sweetest! moments for their own sake  
hailed

And more desired, more precious, for thy  
song,

In silence listening, like a devout child,  
My soul lay passive, by thy various strain  
Driven as in surges now beneath the  
stars,

With momentary stars of my own  
birth,

Fair constellated foam, still darting off  
Into the darkness; now a tranquil sea,  
Outspread and bright, yet swelling to  
the moon.

And when—O Friend! my comforter  
and guide!

Strong in thyself, and powerful to give  
strength!—

Thy long sustained Song finally closed,  
And thy deep voice had ceased—yet  
thou thyself

Wert still before my eyes, and round us  
both

That happy vision of beloved faces—  
Scarce conscious, and yet conscious of its  
close

I sate, my being blended in one thought  
(Thought was it? or aspiration? or re-  
solve?)

Absorbed, yet hanging still upon the  
sound—

And when I rose, I found myself in prayer.  
*January, 1807. 1817.*

### SONG FROM ZAPOLYA

A SUNNY shaft did I behold,  
From sky to earth it slanted:  
And poised therein a bird so bold—  
Sweet bird, thou wert enchanted!

He sunk, he rose, he twinkled, he trolled  
Within that shaft of sunny mist;  
His eyes of fire, his beak of gold,  
All else of amethyst!

And thus he sang: Adieu! adieu!  
Love's dreams prove seldom true.  
The blossoms they make no delay;  
The sparkling dew-drops will not stay.

Sweet month of May,  
We must away;  
Far far away!  
To-day! to-day! 1815. 1817.

### YOUTH AND AGE

VERSE, a breeze mid blossoms straying,  
Where Hope clung feeding, like a bee—  
Both were mine! Life went a-maying  
With Nature, Hope, and Poesy,  
When I was young!

When I was young?—Ah, woful When!  
Ah! for the change 'twixt Now and Then!  
This breathing house not built with hands,  
This body that does me grievous wrong,  
O'er aery cliffs and glittering sands,  
How lightly *then* it flashed along:—  
Like those trim skiffs, unknown of yore,  
On winding lakes and rivers wide,  
That ask no aid of sail or oar,  
That fear no spite of wind or tide!  
Nought cared this body for wind or  
weather

When Youth and I lived in't together.  
Flowers are lovely; Love is flower-like;  
Friendship is a sheltering tree;  
O! the joys, that came down shower-like,  
Of Friendship, Love, and Liberty,  
Ere I was old!

Ere I was old? Ah woful Ere,  
Which tells me, Youth's no longer here!  
O, Youth! for years so many and sweet,  
'Tis known, that Thou and I were one,  
I'll think it but a fond conceit—  
It cannot be that Thou art gone!  
Thy vesper-bell hath not yet toll'd:—  
And thou wert aye a masker bold!  
What strange disguise hast now put on,  
To *make believe*, that thou art gone?  
I see these locks in silvery slips,  
This drooping gait, this altered size:  
But Spring-tide blossoms on thy lips,  
And tears take sunshine from thine eyes!  
Life is but thought: so think I will  
That Youth and I are house-mates still.  
Dew-drops are the gems of morning,  
But the tears of mournful eve!  
Where no hope is, life's a warning  
That only serves to make us grieve,  
When we are old:

That only serves to make us grieve  
 With oft and tedious taking-leave  
 Like some poor nigh-related guest,  
 That may not rudely be dismiss'd;  
 Yet hath out-stay'd his welcome while,  
 And tells the jest without the smile.  
*1823 — April, 1832. 1828 — June, 1832.*

### WORK WITHOUT HOPE

ALL Nature seems at work. Slugs leave  
 their lair —  
 The bees are stirring — birds are on the  
 wing —  
 And Winter slumbering in the open air,  
 Wears on his smiling face a dream of  
 Spring!  
 And I the while, the sole unbusy thing,  
 Nor honey make, nor pair, nor build, nor  
 sing.  
 Yet well I ken the banks where amaranths  
 blow,  
 Have traced the fount whence streams  
 of nectar flow.  
 Bloom, O ye amaranths! bloom for whom  
 ye may,  
 For me ye bloom not! Glide, rich  
 streams, away!  
 With lips unbrightened, wreathless brow,  
 I stroll:  
 And would you learn the spells that  
 drowse my soul?  
 Work without Hope draws nectar in a  
 sieve,  
 And Hope without an object cannot live.  
*February, 1827. 1828.*

### THE GARDEN OF BOCCACCIO

Or late, in one of those most weary hours,  
 When life seems emptied of all genial  
 powers,  
 A dreary mood, which he who ne'er has  
 known  
 May bless his happy lot, I sate alone;  
 And, from the numbing spell to win relief,  
 Call'd on the Past for thought of glee or  
 grief.  
 In vain! bereft alike of grief and glee,  
 I sate and cower'd o'er my own vacancy!  
 And as I watched the dull continuous  
 ache,  
 Which, all else slumbering, seem'd alone  
 to wake;

O Friend! long wont to notice yet conceal,  
 And soothe by silence what words cannot  
 heal,  
 I but half saw that quiet hand of thine  
 Place on my desk this exquisite design,  
 Boccaccio's Garden and its faery,  
 The love, the joyance, and the gallantry!  
 An Idyll, with Boccaccio's spirit warm,  
 Framed in the silent poesy of form.

Like flocks a-down a newly-bath'd steep  
 Emerging from a mist: or like a stream  
 Of music soft, that not dispels the sleep,  
 But casts in happier moulds the  
 slumberer's dream,  
 Gazed by an idle eye with silent might  
 The picture stole upon my inward sight.  
 A tremulous warmth crept gradual o'er  
 my chest,  
 As though an infant's finger touch'd my  
 breast.  
 And one by one (I know not whence)  
 were brought  
 All spirits of power that most had stirr'd  
 my thought  
 In selfless boyhood, on a new world tost  
 Of wonder, and in its own fancies lost;  
 Or charm'd my youth, that, kindled from  
 above,  
 Loved ere it loved, and sought a form for  
 love;  
 Or lent a lustre to the earnest scan  
 Of manhood, musing what and whence  
 is man!  
 Wild strain of Scalds, that in the sea-  
 worn caves  
 Rehears'd their war-spell to the winds  
 and waves;  
 Or fateful hymn of those prophetic maids,  
 That call'd on Hertha in deep forest  
 glades;  
 Or minstrel lay, that cheer'd the baron's  
 feast;  
 Or rhyme of city pomp, of monk and  
 priest,  
 Judge, mayor, and many a guild in long  
 array,  
 To high-church pacing on the great saint's  
 day.  
 And many a verse which to myself I sang,  
 That woke the tear yet stole away the  
 pang.  
 Of hopes which in lamenting I renew'd.  
 And last, a matron now, of sober mien,  
 Yet radiant still and with no earthly sheen,

Whom as a faery child my childhood  
 woo'd  
 Even in my dawn of thought —Philosophy;  
 Though then unconscious of herself,  
 pardie,  
 She bore no other name than Poesy;  
 And, like a gift from heaven, in life's  
 glee,  
 That had but newly left a mother's knee,  
 Prattled and play'd with bird and flower,  
 and stone,  
 As if with elfin playfellows well known,  
 And life reveal'd to innocence alone.

Thanks, gentle artist! now I can descry  
 Thy fair creation with a mastering eye,  
 And *all* awake! And now in fix'd gaze  
 stand,  
 Now wander through the Eden of thy  
 hand;  
 Praise the green arches, on the fountain  
 clear  
 See fragment shadows of the crossing  
 deer;  
 And with that serviceable nymph I stoop  
 The crystal from its restless pool to scoop.  
 I see no longer! I myself am there,  
 Sit on the ground-sward, and the banquet  
 share.

'Tis I, that sweep that lute's love-echoing  
 strings,  
 And gaze upon the maid who gazing sings;  
 Or pause and listen to the tinkling bells  
 From the high tower, and think that  
 there she dwells.  
 With old Boccaccio's soul I stand possess'd,  
 And breathe an air like life, that swells my  
 chest.  
 The brightness of the world, O thou once  
 free,  
 And always fair, rare land of courtesy!  
 O Florence! with the Tuscan fields and  
 hills

And famous Arno, fed with all their rills;  
 Thou brightest star of star-bright Italy!  
 Rich, ornate, populous, all treasures  
 thine,

The golden corn, the olive, and the vine,  
 Fair cities, gallant mansions, castles old,  
 And forests, where beside his leafy hold  
 The sullen boar hath heard the distant  
 horn,  
 And whets his tusks against the gnarled  
 thorn;

Palladian palace with its storied halls;

Fountains, where Love lies listening to  
 their falls;  
 Gardens, where flings the bridge its airy  
 span,  
 And Nature makes her happy home with  
 man:  
 Where many a gorgeous flower is duly fed  
 With its own rill, on its own spangled bed,  
 And wreathes the marble urn, or leans  
 its head,  
 A mimic mourner, that with veil with-  
 drawn  
 Weeps liquid gems, the presents of the  
 dawn;—  
 Thine all delights, and every muse is  
 thine;  
 And more than all, the embrace and  
 intertwine  
 Of all with all in gay and twinkling dance!

Mid gods of Greece and warriors of  
 romance,  
 See! Boccaccio sits, unfolding on his knees  
 The new found roll of old Mæonides;  
 But from his mantle's fold, and near the  
 heart,  
 Peers Ovid's Holy Book of Love's sweet  
 smart!<sup>1</sup>

O all-enjoying and all-blending sage,  
 Long be it mine to con thy mazy page,  
 Where half conceal'd, the eye of fancy  
 views  
 Fauns, nymphs, and winged saints, all  
 gracious to thy muse!  
 Still in thy garden let me watch their  
 pranks,  
 And see in Dian's vest between the ranks  
 Of the trim vines, some maid that half  
 believes  
 The *vestal* fires, of which her lover grieves,  
 With that sly satyr peeping through the  
 leaves! 1828. 1829.

<sup>1</sup> I know few more striking or more interesting proofs of the overwhelming influence which the study of the Greek and Roman classics exercised on the judgments, feelings, and imaginations of the literati of Europe at the commencement of the restoration of literature, than the passage in the *Filicopo* of Boccaccio, where the sage instructor, Racheo, as soon as the young prince and the beautiful girl Biancifiore had learned their letters, sets them to study the Holy Book, Ovid's *Art of Love*. "Incominciò Racheo a mettere il suo officio in esecuzione con intera sollecitudine. E loro, in breve tempo, insegnato a conoscer le lettere, fece leggere il santo libro d'Ovvidio, nel quale il sommo poet a mostra, come i santi fuochi di Venere si debbano 'ne freddi cuori accendere." (*Coleridge*.)

## PHANTOM OR FACT

A DIALOGUE IN VERSE

AUTHOR

A LOVELY form there sate beside my bed,  
 And such a feeling calm its presence shed,  
 A tender love so pure from earthly leaven,  
 That I unnethe the fancy might control,  
 'Twas my own spirit newly come from  
 heaven,

Wooing its gentle way into my soul!  
 But ah! the change — It had not stirr'd,  
 and yet —

Alas! that change how fain would I for-  
 get!

That shrinking back, like one that had  
 mistook!

That weary, wandering, disavowing  
 look!

'Twas all another, feature, look, and  
 frame,  
 And still, methought, I knew, it was the  
 same!

FRIEND

This riddling tale, to what does it belong?  
 Is't history? vision? or an idle song?  
 Or rather say at once, within what space  
 Of time this wild disastrous change took  
 place?

AUTHOR

Call it a *moment's* work (and such it  
 seems)

This tale's a fragment from the life of  
 dreams;

But say, that years matur'd the silent  
 strife,

And 'tis a record from the dream of life.  
 1830. 1834.

# SCOTT

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## SCOTT

### WILLIAM AND HELEN

Imitated from Bürger's "Lenore." See Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, I, Chap. 7.

FROM heavy dreams fair Helen rose,  
And eyed the dawning red :  
"Alas, my love, thou tarriest long !  
O art thou false or dead ?"

With gallant Frederick's princely power  
He sought the bold crusade,  
But not a word from Judah's wars  
Told Helen how he sped.

With Paynim and with Saracen  
At length a truce was made,  
And every knight returned to dry  
The tears his love had shed.

Our gallant host was homeward bound  
With many a song of joy ;  
Green waved the laurel in each plume,  
The badge of victory.

And old and young, and sire and son,  
To meet them crowd the way,  
With shouts and mirth and melody,  
The debt of love to pay.

Full many a maid her true-love met,  
And sobbed in his embrace,  
And fluttering joy in tears and smiles  
Arrayed full many a face.

Nor joy nor smile for Helen sad,  
She sought the host in vain ;  
For none could tell her William's fate,  
If faithless or if slain.

The martial band is past and gone ;  
She rends her raven hair,  
And in distraction's bitter mood  
She weeps with wild despair.

"O, rise, my child," her mother said,  
"Nor sorrow thus in vain ;  
A perjured lover's fleeting heart  
No tears recall again."

"O, Mother, what is gone is gone,  
What's lost forever lorn :  
Death, death alone can comfort me ;  
O had I ne'er been born !

"O, break, my heart, O, break at once !  
Drink my life-blood, Despair !  
No joy remains on earth for me,  
For me in heaven no share."

"O, enter not in judgment, Lord !"  
The pious mother prays ;  
"Impute not guilt to thy frail child !  
She knows not what she says.

"O, say thy pater-noster, child !  
O, turn to God and grace !  
His will, that turned thy bliss to bale,  
Can change thy bale to bliss."

"O mother, mother, what is bliss ?  
O mother, what is bale ?  
My William's love was heaven on earth,  
Without it earth is hell.

"Why should I pray to ruthless Heaven,  
Since my loved William's slain ?  
I only prayed for William's sake,  
And all my prayers were vain."

"O, take the sacrament, my child,  
And check these tears that flow ;  
By resignation's humble prayer,  
O, hallowed be thy woe !"

"No sacrament can quench this fire,  
Or slake this scorching pain ;  
No sacrament can bid the dead  
Arise and live again.

"O, break, my heart, O, break at once !  
Be thou my god, Despair !  
Heaven's heaviest blow has fallen on me,  
And vain each fruitless prayer."

"O, enter not in judgment, Lord,  
With thy frail child of clay !  
She knows not what her tongue has spoke ;  
Impute it not, I pray !

"Forbear, my child, this desperate woe,  
And turn to God and grace;  
Well can devotion's heavenly glow  
Convert thy bale to bliss."

"O mother, mother, what is bliss?  
O mother, what is bale?  
Without my William what were heaven,  
Or with him what were hell?"

Wild she arraigns the eternal doom,  
Upbraids each sacred power,  
Till, spent, she sought her silent room,  
All in the lonely tower.

She beat her breast, she wrung her hands,  
Till sun and day were o'er,  
And through the glimmering lattice  
shone  
The twinkling of the star.

Then, crash! the heavy drawbridge fell  
That o'er the moat was hung;  
And, clatter! clatter! on its boards  
The hoof of courser rung.

The clank of echoing steel was heard  
As off the rider bounded;  
And slowly on the winding stair  
A heavy footstep sounded.

And hark! and hark! a knock — tap!  
tap!  
A rustling stifled noise; —  
Door-latch and tinkling staples ring; —  
At length a whispering voice.

"Awake, awake, arise, my love!  
How, Helen, dost thou fare?  
Wak'st thou, or sleep'st! laugh'st thou,  
or weep'st?  
Hast thought on me, my fair?"

"My love! my love! — so late by  
night! —  
I waked, I wept for thee;  
Much have I borne since dawn of morn;  
Where, William, couldst thou be?"

"We saddle late — from Hungary  
I rode since darkness fell;  
And to its bourne we both return  
Before the matin-bell."

"O, rest this night within my arms,  
And warm thee in their fold!

Chill howls through hawthorn bush the  
wind: —  
My love is deadly cold."

"Let the wind howl through hawthorn  
bush!  
This night we must away;  
The steed is wight, the spur is bright;  
I cannot stay till day."

"Busk, busk, and boune! Thou mount'st  
behind  
Upon my black barb steed;  
O'er stock and stile, a hundred miles,  
We haste to bridal bed."

"To-night — to-night a hundred miles! —  
O dearest William, stay!  
The bell strikes twelve — dark, dismal  
hour!  
O, wait, my love, till day!"

"Look here, look here — the moon shines  
clear —  
Full fast I ween we ride:  
Mount and away! for ere the day  
We reach our bridal bed.

"The black barb snorts, the bridle rings;  
Haste, busk, and boune, and seat thee!  
The feast is made, the chamber spread,  
The bridal guests await thee."

Strong love prevailed: she busks, she  
bounces,  
She mounts the barb behind,  
And round her darling William's waist  
Her lily arms she twined.

And, hurry! hurry! off they rode,  
As fast as fast might be;  
Spurned from the courser's thundering  
heels  
The flashing pebbles flee.

And on the right and on the left,  
Ere they could snatch a view,  
Fast, fast each mountain, mead, and plain,  
And cot and castle flew.

"Sit fast — dost fear? — The moon  
shines clear —  
Fleet goes my barb — keep hold!  
Fear'st thou?" — "O no!" she faintly  
said;  
"But why so stern and cold?"

"What yonder rings? what yonder sings?  
Why shrieks the owlet gray?"

"'Tis death-bell's clang, 'tis funeral song,  
The body to the clay.

"With song and clang at morrow's dawn  
Ye may inter the dead:  
To-night I ride with my young bride  
To deck our bridal bed.

"Come with thy choir, thou coffined  
guest,  
To swell our nuptial song!  
Come, priest, to bless our marriage feast!  
Come all, come all along!"

Ceased clang and song; down sunk the  
bier;  
The shrouded corpse arose:  
And hurry! hurry! all the train  
The thundering steed pursues.

And forward! forward! on they go;  
High snorts the straining steed;  
Thick pants the rider's laboring breath,  
As headlong on they speed.

"O William, why this savage haste!  
And where thy bridal bed?"

"'Tis distant far, low, damp, and chill,  
And narrow, trustless maid."

"No room for me?"—"Enough for  
both;—  
Speed, speed, my barb, thy course!"  
O'er thundering bridge, through boiling  
surge,  
He drove the furious horse.

Tramp! tramp! along the land they  
rode,  
Splash! splash! along the sea;  
The scourge is wight, the spur is bright,  
The flashing pebbles flee.

Fled past on right and left how fast  
Each forest, grove, and bower!  
On right and left fled past how fast  
Each city, town, and tower!

"Dost fear? dost fear? The moon  
shines clear,  
Dost fear to ride with me?—  
Hurrah! hurrah! the dead can ride!"—  
"O William, let them be!"—

"See there, see there! What yonder  
swings

And creaks, mid whistling rain?"—  
"Gibbet and steel, the accursed wheel;  
A murderer in his chain.—

"Hollo! thou felon, follow here:  
To bridal bed we ride;  
And thou shalt prance a fetter dance  
Before me and my bride."

And, hurry! hurry! clash, clash, clash!  
The wasted form descends;  
And fleet as wind through hazel bush  
The wild career attends.

Tramp! tramp! along the land they rode,  
Splash! splash! along the sea;  
The scourge is red, the spur drops blood,  
The flashing pebbles flee.

How fled what moonshine faintly showed!  
How fled what darkness hid!  
How fled the earth beneath their feet,  
The Heaven above their head!

"Dost fear? dost fear? The moon  
shines clear,  
And well the dead can ride;  
Dost, faithful Helen, fear for them?"—  
"O leave in peace the dead!"—

"Barb! Barb! methinks I hear the cock,  
The sand will soon be run:  
Barb! Barb! I smell the morning air;  
The race is well-nigh done."

Tramp! tramp! along the land they rode,  
Splash! splash! along the sea;  
The scourge is red, the spur drops blood,  
The flashing pebbles flee.

"Hurrah! hurrah! well ride the dead;  
The bride, the bride is come;  
And soon we reach the bridal bed,  
For, Helen, here's my home."

Reluctant on its rusty hinge  
Revolved an iron door,  
And by the pale moon's setting beam  
Were seen a church and tower.

With many a shriek and cry whiz round  
The birds of midnight scared;  
And rustling like autumnal leaves  
Unhallowed ghosts were heard.

O'er many a tomb and tombstone pale  
 He spurred the fiery horse,  
 Till suddenly at an open grave  
 He checked the wondrous course.

The falling gauntlet quits the rein,  
 Down drops the casque of steel,  
 The cuirass leaves his shrinking side,  
 The spur his gory heel.

The eyes desert the naked skull,  
 The mouldering flesh the bone,  
 Till Helen's lily arms entwine  
 A ghastly skeleton.

The furious barb snorts fire and foam,  
 And with a fearful bound  
 Dissolves at once in empty air,  
 And leaves her on the ground.

Half seen by fits, by fits half heard,  
 Pale spectres flit along,  
 Wheel round the maid in dismal dance,  
 And howl the funeral song;

"E'en when the heart's with anguish  
 cleft  
 Revere the doom of Heaven,  
 Her soul is from her body reft;  
 Her spirit be forgiven!"

1795. 1796.

### THE VIOLET

See Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, I, Chap. 8, and the  
*Century Magazine*, July, 1899.

THE violet in her green-wood bower,  
 Where birchen boughs with hazels  
 mingle,  
 May boast itself the fairest flower  
 In glen or copse or forest dingle.

Though fair her gems of azure hue,  
 Beneath the dewdrop's weight reclin-  
 ing;  
 I've seen an eye of lovelier blue,  
 More sweet through watery lustre  
 shining.

The summer sun that dew shall dry  
 Ere yet the day be past its morrow,  
 Nor longer in my false love's eye  
 Remained the tear of parting sorrow.

1797. 1810.

### TO A LADY

WITH FLOWERS FROM A ROMAN WALL

TAKE these flowers which, purple waving,  
 On the ruined rampart grew,  
 Where, the sons of freedom braving,  
 Rome's imperial standards flew.

Warriors from the breach of danger  
 Pluck no longer laurels there;  
 They but yield the passing stranger  
 Wild-flower wreaths for Beauty's hair.  
 1797.

### THE EVE OF SAINT JOHN

THE Baron of Smaylho'me rose with day,  
 He spurred his courser on,  
 Without stop or stay, down the rocky way,  
 That leads to Brotherstone.

He went not with the bold Buccleuch  
 His banner broad to rear;  
 He went not 'gainst the English yew  
 To lift the Scottish spear.

Yet his plate-jack was braced and his  
 helmet was laced,  
 And his vaunt-brace of proof he wore;  
 At his saddle-gerthe was a good steel  
 sperthe,  
 Full ten pound weight and more.

The baron returned in three days' space  
 And his looks were sad and sour;  
 And weary was his courser's pace  
 As he reached his rocky tower.

He came not from where Ancram Moor  
 Ran red with English blood;  
 Where the Douglas true and the bold  
 Buccleuch  
 'Gainst keen Lord Evers stood.

Yet was his helmet hacked and hewed,  
 His acton pierced and tore,  
 His axe and his dagger with blood im-  
 brued,—  
 But it was not English gore.

He lighted at the Chapellage,  
 He held him close and still;  
 And he whistled thrice for his little foot-  
 page,  
 His name was English Will,



"Come thou hither, my little foot-page,  
Come hither to my knee;  
Though thou art young and tender of age,  
I think thou art true to me.

"Come, tell me all that thou hast seen,  
And look thou tell me true!  
Since I from Smaylho'me tower have  
been,  
What did thy lady do?"

"My lady, each night, sought the lonely  
light  
That burns on the wild Watchfold;  
For from height to height the beacons  
bright  
Of the English foemen told.

"The bittern clamored from the moss,  
The wind blew loud and shrill;  
Yet the craggy pathway she did cross  
To the eiry Beacon Hill.

"I watched her steps, and silent came  
Where she sat her on a stone; —  
No watchman stood by the dreary flame,  
It burnèd all alone.

"The second night I kept her in sight  
Till to the fire she came,  
And, by Mary's might! an armed knight  
Stood by the lonely flame.

"And many a word that warlike lord  
Did speak to my lady there;  
But the rain fell fast and loud blew the  
blast,  
And I heard not what they were.

"The third night there the sky was fair,  
And the mountain-blast was still,  
As again I watched the secret pair  
On the lonesome Beacon Hill.

"And I heard her name the midnight  
hour,  
And name this holy eve;  
And say, 'Come this night to thy lady's  
bower;  
Ask no bold baron's leave.

"He lifts his spear with the bold Buc-  
cleuch;  
His lady is all alone;  
The door she'll undo to her knight so true  
On the eve of good Saint John.'

"I cannot come; I must not come;  
I dare not come to thee;  
On the eve of Saint John I must wander  
alone:  
In thy bower I may not be.'

"Now, out on thee, faint-hearted  
knight!  
Thou shouldst not say me nay;  
For the eve is sweet, and when lovers  
meet  
Is worth the whole summer's day.

"And I'll chain the blood-hound, and  
the warder shall not sound,  
And rushes shall be strewed on the  
stair;  
So, by the black rood-stone and by holy  
Saint John,  
I conjure thee, my love, to be there!"

"Though the blood-hound be mute and  
the rush beneath my foot,  
And the warder his bugle should not  
blow,  
Yet there sleepeth a priest in the chamber  
to the east,  
And my footstep he would know.'

"O, fear not the priest who sleepeth to  
the east,  
For to Dryburgh the way he has ta'en;  
And there to say mass, till three days do  
pass,  
For the soul of a knight that is slayne.'

"He turned him around and grimly he  
frowned  
Then he laughed right scornfully —  
'He who says the mass-rite for the soul of  
that knight  
May as well say mass for me:

"At the lone midnight hour when bad  
spirits have power  
In thy chamber will I be. —'  
With that he was gone and my lady left  
alone,  
And no more did I see."

Then changed, I trow, was that bold  
baron's brow  
From the dark to the blood-red high;  
"Now, tell me the mien of the knight  
thou hast seen,  
For, by Mary, he shall die!"

"His arms shone full bright in the  
beacon's red light;  
His plume it was scarlet and blue;  
On his shield was a hound in a silver leash  
bound,  
And his crest was a branch of the yew."

"Thou liest, thou liest, thou little foot-  
page,  
Loud dost thou lie to me!  
For that knight is cold and low laid in  
mould,  
All under the Eildon-tree."

"Yet hear but my word, my noble lord!  
For I heard her name his name;  
And that lady bright, she called the  
knight  
Sir Richard of Coldinghame."

The bold baron's brow then changed, I  
trow,  
From high blood-red to pale —  
"The grave is deep and dark — and the  
corpse is stiff and stark —  
So I may not trust thy tale.

"Where fair Tweed flows round holy  
Melrose,  
And Eildon slopes to the plain,  
Full three nights ago by some secret foe  
That gay gallant was slain.

"The varying light deceived thy sight,  
And the wild winds drowned the name;  
For the Dryburgh bells ring and the white  
monks do sing  
For Sir Richard of Coldinghame!"

He passed the court-gate and he oped the  
tower-gate,  
And he mounted the narrow stair  
To the bartizan-seat where, with maids  
that on her wait,  
He found his lady fair.

That lady sat in mournful mood;  
Looked over hill and vale;  
Over Tweed's fair flood and Mertoun's  
wood,  
And all down Teviotdale.

"Now hail, now hail, thou lady bright!"  
"Now hail, thou baron true!  
What news, what news, from Ancram  
fight?  
What news from the bold Buccleuch!"

"The Ancram moor is red with gore,  
For many a Southern fell;  
And Buccleuch has charged us evermore  
To watch our beacons well."

The lady blushed red, but nothing she  
said:  
Nor added the baron a word:  
Then she stepped down the stair to her  
chamber fair,  
And so did her moody lord.

In sleep the lady mourned, and the baron  
tossed and turned,  
And oft to himself he said, —  
"The worms around him creep, and his  
bloody grave is deep —  
It cannot give up the dead!"

It was near the ringing of matin-bell,  
The night was well-nigh done,  
When a heavy sleep on that baron fell,  
On the eve of good Saint John.

The lady looked through the chamber  
fair,  
By the light of a dying flame;  
And she was aware of a knight stood  
there —  
Sir Richard of Coldinghame!

"Alas! away, away!" she cried,  
"For the holy Virgin's sake!"  
"Lady, I know who sleeps by thy side;  
But, lady, he will not awake.

"By Eildon-tree for long nights three  
In bloody grave have I lain;  
The mass and the death-prayer are said  
for me,  
But, lady, they are said in vain.

"By the baron's brand, near Tweed's  
fair strand,  
Most foully slain I fell;  
And my restless sprite on the beacon's  
height  
For a space is doomed to dwell.

"At our trysting-place, for a certain  
space,  
I must wander to and fro;  
But I had not had power to come to thy  
bower  
Hadst thou not conjured me so."

Love mastered fear — her brow she  
crossed;  
"How, Richard, hast thou sped?  
And art thou saved or art thou lost?"  
The vision shook his head!

"Who spileth life shall forfeit life:  
So bid thy lord believe:  
That lawless love is guilt above,  
This awful sign receive."

He laid his left palm on an oaken beam  
His right upon her hand;  
The lady shrunk and fainting sunk,  
For it scorched like a fiery brand.

The sable score of fingers four  
Remains on that board impressed;  
And forevermore that lady wore  
A covering on her wrist.

There is a nun in Dryburgh bower  
Ne'er looks upon the sun;  
There is a monk in Melrose tower  
He speaketh word to none.

That nun who ne'er beholds the day,  
That monk who speaks to none —  
That nun was Smaylho'me's lady gay,  
That monk the bold baron.

1799. 1801.

### CADYOW CASTLE

WHEN princely Hamilton's abode  
Ennobled Cadyow's Gothic towers,  
The song went round, the goblet flowed,  
And revel sped the laughing hours.

Then, thrilling to the harp's gay sound,  
So sweetly rung each vaulted wall,  
And echoed light the dancer's bound,  
As mirth and music cheered the hall.

But Cadyow's towers in ruins laid,  
And vaults by ivy mantled o'er,  
Thrill to the music of the shade,  
Or echo Evan's hoarser roar.

Yet still of Cadyow's faded fame  
You bid me tell a minstrel tale,  
And tune my harp of Border frame  
On the wild banks of Evandale.

For thou, from scenes of courtly pride,  
From pleasure's lighter scenes, canst  
turn,  
To draw oblivion's pall aside  
And mark the long-forgotten urn.

Then, noble maid! at thy command  
Again the crumbled halls shall rise;  
Lo! as on Evan's banks we stand,  
The past returns — the present flies.

Where with the rock's wood-covered side  
Were blended late the ruins green,  
Rise turrets in fantastic pride  
And feudal banners flaunt between:

Where the rude torrent's brawling course  
Was shagged with thorn and tangling  
sloe,  
The ashler buttress braves its force  
And ramparts frown in battled row.

'Tis night — the shade of keep and spire  
Obscurely dance on Evan's stream;  
And on the wave the warder's fire  
Is checkering the moonlight beam.

Fades slow their light; the east is gray:  
The weary warder leaves his tower;  
Steeds snort, uncoupled stag-hounds bay,  
And merry hunters quit the bower.

The drawbridge falls — they hurry out —  
Clatters each plank and swinging chain,  
As, dashing o'er, the jovial rout  
Urge the shy steed and slack the rein.

First of his troop, the chief rode on;  
His shouting merry-men throng be-  
hind;  
The steed of princely Hamilton  
Was fleetier than the mountain wind.

From the thick copse the roebucks bound,  
The startled red-deer scuds the plain,  
For the hoarse bugle's warrior-sound  
Has roused their mountain haunts  
again.

Through the huge oaks of Evandale,  
Whose limbs a thousand years have  
worn,  
What sullen roar comes down the gale  
And drowns the hunter's pealing horn?

Mightiest of all the beasts of chase  
That roam in woody Caledon,  
Crashing the forest in his race,  
The Mountain Bull comes thundering  
on.

Fierce on the hunter's quivered band  
He rolls his eyes of swarthy glow,  
Spurns with black hoof and horn the  
sand,  
And tosses high his mane of snow.

Aimed well the chieftain's lance has  
flown;  
Struggling in blood the savage lies;  
His roar is sunk in hollow groan —  
Sound, merry huntsmen! sound the  
pryse!

'Tis noon — against the knotted oak  
The hunters rest the idle spear;  
Curls through the trees the slender smoke,  
Where yeomen dight the woodland  
cheer,

Proudly the chieftain marked his clan,  
On greenwood lap all careless thrown  
Yet missed his eye the boldest man  
That bore the name of Hamilton.

"Why fills not Bothwellhaugh his place,  
Still wont our weal and woe to share?  
Why comes he not our sport to grace?  
Why shares he not our hunter's fare?"

Stern Claud replied with darkening face —  
Gray Paisley's haughty lord was he —  
"At merry feast or buxom chase  
No more the warrior wilt thou see.

"Few suns have set since Woodhouselee  
Saw Bothwellhaugh's bright goblets  
foam,  
When to his hearths in social glee  
The war-worn soldier turned him home.

"There, wan from her maternal throes,  
His Margaret, beautiful and mild,  
Sate in her bower, a pallid rose,  
And peaceful nursed her new-born  
child.

"O change accursed! past are those days;  
False Murray's ruthless spoilers came,  
And, for the hearth's domestic blaze,  
Ascends destruction's volumed flame.

"What sheeted phantom wanders wild  
Where mountain Eske through wood-  
land flows,  
Her arms enfold a shadowy child —  
O! is it she, the pallid rose?

"The wildered traveller sees her glide,  
And hears her feeble voice with awe —  
'Revenge,' she cries, 'on Murray's pride!  
And woe for injured Bothwellhaugh!'"

He ceased — and cries of rage and grief  
Burst mingling from the kindred band,  
And half arose the kindling chief,  
And half unsheathed his Arran brand.

But who o'er bush, o'er stream and rock,  
Rides headlong with resistless speed,  
Whose bloody poniard's frantic stroke  
Drives to the leap his jaded steed;

Whose cheek is pale, whose eyeballs glare,  
As one some visioned sight that saw,  
Whose hands are bloody, loose his hair?  
'Tis he! 'tis he! 'tis Bothwellhaugh.

From gory selle and reeling steed  
Sprung the fierce horseman with a bound,  
And, reeking from the recent deed,  
He dashed his carbine on the ground.

Sternly he spoke — "'Tis sweet to hear  
In good greenwood the bugle blown,  
But sweeter to Revenge's ear  
To drink a tyrant's dying groan.

"Your slaughtered quarry proudly trode  
At dawning morn o'er dale and down,  
But prouder base-born Murray rode  
Through old Linlithgow's crowded  
town.

"From the wild Border's humbled side,  
In haughty triumph marched he,  
While Knox relaxed his bigot pride  
And smiled the traitorous pomp to see.

"But can stern Power, with all his vaunt,  
Or Pomp, with all her courtly glare,  
The settled heart of Vengeance daunt,  
Or change the purpose of Despair?

"With hackbut bent, my secret stand,  
Dark as the purposed deed, I chose,  
And marked where mingling in his band  
Trooped Scottish pipes and English  
bows.

"Dark Morton, girt with many a spear,  
Murder's foul minion, led the van;  
And clashed their broadswords in the rear  
The wild Macfarlanes' plaided clan.

"Glencairn and stout Parkhead were nigh,  
Obsequious at their Regent's rein,  
And haggard Lindsay's iron eye,  
That saw fair Mary weep in vain.

"Mid pennoned spears, a steely grove,  
Proud Murray's plumage floated high;  
Scarce could his trampling charger move,  
So close the minions crowded nigh.

"From the raised vizor's shade his eye,  
Dark-rolling, glanced the ranks along,  
And his steel truncheon, waved on high,  
Seemed marshalling the iron throng.

"But yet his saddened brow confessed  
A passing shade of doubt and awe;  
Some fiend was whispering in his breast,  
'Beware of injured Bothwellhaugh!'

"The death-shot parts! the charger  
springs;  
Wild rises tumult's startling roar!  
And Murray's plummy helmet rings —  
Rings on the ground to rise no more.

"What joy the raptured youth can feel,  
To hear her love the loved one tell —  
Or he who broaches on his steel  
The wolf by whom his infant fell.

"But dearer to my injured eye  
To see in dust proud Murray roll;  
And mine was ten times trebled joy  
To hear him groan his felon soul.

"My Margaret's spectre glided near.  
With pride her bleeding victim saw,  
And shrieked in his death-deafened ear,  
'Remember injured Bothwellhaugh!'

"Then speed thee, noble Chatlerault!  
Spread to the wind thy bannered tree!  
Each warrior bend his Clydesdale bow —  
Murray is fallen and Scotland free!"

Vaults every warrior to his steed;  
Loud bugles join their wild acclaim —  
"Murray is fallen and Scotland freed!  
Couch, Arran, couch thy spear of  
flame!"

But see! the minstrel vision fails —  
The glimmering spears are seen no  
more;  
The shouts of war die on the gales,  
Or sink in Evan's lonely roar.

For the loud bugle pealing high,  
The blackbird whistles down the vale,  
And sunk in ivied ruins lie  
The bannered towers of Evandale.

For chiefs intent on bloody deed,  
And Vengeance shouting o'er the slain,  
Lo! high-born Beauty rules the steed,  
Or graceful guides the silken rein.

And long may Peace and Pleasure own  
The maids who list the minstrel's tale;  
Nor e'er a ruder guest be known  
On the fair banks of Evandale!

1801. 1803.

### THE MAID OF NEIDPATH.

O, LOVERS' eyes are sharp to see,  
And lovers' ears in hearing;  
And love in life's extremity  
Can lend an hour of cheering.  
Disease had been in Mary's bower,  
And slow decay from mourning,  
Though now she sits on Neidpath's tower  
To watch her love's returning.

All sunk and dim her eyes so bright,  
Her form decayed by pining,  
Till through her wasted hand at night  
You saw the taper shining;  
By fits, a sultry hectic hue  
Across her cheek was flying;  
By fits, so ashy pale she grew,  
Her maidens thought her dying.

Yet keenest powers to see and hear  
Seemed in her frame residing;  
Before the watch-dog pricked his ear,  
She heard her lover's riding;  
Ere scarce a distant form was kenned,  
She knew, and waved to greet him;  
And o'er the battlement did bend,  
As on the wing to meet him.

He came — he passed — an heedless gaze,  
As o'er some stranger glancing;  
Her welcome, spoke in faltering phrase,  
Lost in his courser's prancing —



The castle arch, whose hollow tone  
Returns each whisper spoken,  
Could scarcely catch the feeble moan  
Which told her heart was broken.  
1806.

## HUNTING SONG

WAKEN, lords and ladies gay,  
On the mountain dawns the day,  
All the jolly chase is here,  
With hawk and horse and hunting spear!  
Hounds are in their couples yelling,  
Hawks are whistling, horns are knelling,  
Merrily, merrily, mingle they,  
"Waken, lords and ladies gay."

Waken, lords and ladies gay,  
The mist has left the mountain gray,  
Springlets in the dawn are steaming,  
Diamonds on the brake are gleaming:  
And foresters have busy been  
To track the buck in thicket green;  
Now we come to chant our lay,  
"Waken, lords and ladies gay."

Waken, lords and ladies gay,  
To the green-wood haste away;  
We can show you where he lies,  
Fleet of foot and tall of size;  
We can show the marks he made,  
When 'gainst the oak his antlers frayed;  
You shall see him brought to bay,  
"Waken, lords and ladies gay."

Louder, louder chant the lay,  
Waken, lords and ladies gay!  
Tell them youth and mirth and glee  
Run a course as well as we;  
Time, stern huntsman, who can balk,  
Stanch as hound and fleet as hawk?  
Think of this and rise with day,  
Gentle lords and ladies gay.

1808.

SOLDIER, REST! THY WARFARE  
O'ER

SOLDIER, rest! thy warfare o'er,  
Sleep the sleep that knows not break-  
ing;  
Dream of battled fields no more,  
Days of danger, nights of waking.  
In our isle's enchanted hall,

Hands unseen thy couch are strewing,  
Fairy strains of music fall,  
Every sense in slumber dewing.  
Soldier, rest! thy warfare o'er,  
Dream of fighting fields no more;  
Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking,  
Morn of toil, nor night of waking.

No rude sound shall reach thine ear,  
Armor's clang, or war-steed champing,  
Trump nor pibroch summon here  
Mustering clan or squadron tramping.  
Yet the lark's shrill fife may come  
At the daybreak from the fallow,  
And the bittorn sound his drum,  
Booming from the sedgy shallow.  
Ruder sounds shall none be near,  
Guards nor warders challenge here,  
Here's no war-steed's neigh and champ-  
ing,  
Shouting clans or squadrons stamping.

Huntsman, rest! thy chase is done;  
While our slumbrous spells assail ye,  
Dream not, with the rising sun,  
Bugles here shall sound reveillé.  
Sleep! the deer is in his den;  
Sleep! thy hounds are by thee lying:  
Sleep! nor dream in yonder glen  
How thy gallant steed lay dying.  
Huntsman, rest! thy chase is done;  
Think not of the rising sun,  
For at dawning to assail ye  
Here no bugles sound reveillé.

From *The Lady of the Lake*, 1810.

HAIL TO THE CHIEF WHO IN  
TRIUMPH ADVANCES!

HAIL to the Chief who in triumph ad-  
vances!  
Honored and blessed be the ever-green  
Pine!  
Long may the tree, in his banner that  
glances,  
Flourish, the shelter and grace of our  
line!  
Heaven send it happy dew,  
Earth lend it sap anew,  
Gayly to burgeon and broadly to grow,  
While every Highland glen  
Sends our shout back again,  
"Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho!  
ieroe!"

Ours is no sapling, chance-sown by the fountain,

Blooming at Beltane, in winter to fade;  
When the whirlwind has stripped every leaf on the mountain,

The more shall Clan-Alpine exult in her shade.

Moored in the rifted rock,  
Proof to the tempest's shock,  
Firmer he roots him the ruder it blow;  
Menteith and Breadalbane, then  
Echo his praise again,  
"Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho!  
ieroe!"

Proudly our pibroch has thrilled in Glen Fruin,

And Bannochar's groans to our slogan replied;

Glen-Luss and Ross-dhu, they are smoking in ruin,

And the best of Loch Lomond lie dead on her side.

Widow and Saxon maid  
Long shall lament our raid,  
Think of Clan-Alpine with fear and with woe;

Lennox and Leven-glen  
Shake when they hear again,  
"Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho!  
ieroe!"

Row, vassals, row, for the pride of the Highlands!

Stretch to your oars for the ever-green Pine!

O that the rosebud that graces yon islands  
Were wreathed in a garland around him to twine!

O that some seedling gem,  
Worthy such noble stem  
Honored and blessed in their shadow might grow!

Loud should Clan-Alpine then  
Ring from her deepest glen,  
"Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho!  
ieroe!"

From *The Lady of the Lake*.

### CORONACH

HE is gone on the mountain,  
He is lost to the forest,  
Like a summer-dried fountain,  
When our need was the sorest.

The font, reappearing,  
From the rain-drops shall borrow,  
But to us comes no cheering,  
To Duncan no morrow!

The hand of the reaper  
Takes the ears that are hoary,  
But the voice of the weeper  
Wails manhood in glory.  
The autumn winds rushing  
Waft the leaves that are searest,  
But our flower was in flushing,  
When blighting was nearest.

Fleet foot on the correi,  
Sage counsel in cumber,  
Red hand in the foray,  
How sound is thy slumber!  
Like the dew on the mountain,  
Like the foam on the river,  
Like the bubble on the fountain,  
Thou art gone, and forever!  
From *The Lady of the Lake*.

### HARP OF THE NORTH,\* FAREWELL!

HARP of the North, farewell! The hills  
grow dark,  
On purple peaks a deeper shade descending;

In twilight copse the glow-worm lights  
her spark,

The deer, half-seen, are to the covert wending.

Resume thy wizard elm! the fountain  
lending,

And the wild breeze, thy wilder minstrelsy;

Thy numbers sweet with nature's vespers  
blending,

With distant echo from the fold and lea,

And herd-boy's evening pipe, and hum  
of housing bee.

Yet, once again, farewell, thou Minstrel Harp!

Yet, once again, forgive my feeble sway,  
And little reck I of the censure sharp

May idly cavil at an idle lay.  
Much have I owed thy strains on life's  
long way,

Through secret woes the world has  
never known,

When on the weary night dawned wearier  
 day,  
 And bitterer was the grief devoured  
 alone. —  
 That I o'erlive such woes, Enchantress!  
 is thine own.

Hark! as my lingering footsteps slow  
 retire,  
 Some spirit of the Air has waked thy  
 string!

'Tis now a seraph bold, with touch of fire,  
 'Tis now the brush of Fairy's frolic wing.  
 Receding now, the dying numbers ring  
 Fainter and fainter down, the rugged  
 dell;

And now the mountain breezes scarcely  
 bring

A wandering witch-note of the distant  
 spell —

And now, 'tis silent all! — Enchantress,  
 fare thee well!

Conclusion of *The Lady of the Lake*.

#### BRIGNALL BANKS

During the composition of *Rokeby* Scott wrote to Morritt: "There are two or three Songs, and particularly one in Praise of Brignall Banks, which I trust you will like — because, *entre nous*, I like them myself. One of them is a little dashing banditti song, called and entitled Allen-a-Dale."

O, BRIGNALL banks are wild and fair,

And Greta woods are green,

And you may gather garlands there

Would grace a summer queen.

And as I rode by Dalton-hall,

Beneath the turrets high,

A maiden on the castle wall

Was singing merrily:

"O, Brignall banks are fresh and fair,

And Greta woods are green;

I'd rather rove with Edmund there

Than reign our English queen."

"If, maiden, thou wouldst wend with me,

To leave both tower and town,

Thou first must guess what life lead we

That dwell by dale and down.

And if thou canst that riddle read,

As read full well you may,

Then to the greenwood shalt thou speed,

As blithe as Queen of May,"

Yet sung she, "Brignall banks are fair,

And Greta woods are green;

I'd rather rove with Edmund there

Than reign our English queen.

"I read you, by your bugle horn,  
 And by your palfrey good,  
 I read you for a ranger sworn  
 To keep the king's greenwood."

"A ranger, lady, winds his horn,  
 And 'tis at peep of light;

His blast is heard at merry morn,  
 And mine at dead of night."

Yet sung she, "Brignall banks are fair,  
 And Greta woods are gay;

I would I were with Edmund there,  
 To reign his Queen of May!

"With burnished brand and musketoon  
 So gallantly you come,

I read you for a bold dragoon,  
 That lists the tuck of drum."

"I list no more the tuck of drum,  
 No more the trumpet hear;

But when the beetle sounds his hum,  
 My comrades take the spear.

And O, though Brignall banks be fair,  
 And Greta woods be gay,

Yet mickle must the maiden dare  
 Would reign my Queen of May!

"Maiden! a nameless life I lead,  
 A nameless death I'll die;

The fiend whose lantern lights the mead  
 Were better mate than I!

And when I'm with my comrades met  
 Beneath the greenwood bough,

What once we were we all forget,  
 Nor think what we are now.

Yet Brignall banks are fresh and fair,  
 And Greta woods are green,

And you may gather garlands there  
 Would grace a summer queen."

From *Rokeby*, 1813.

#### ALLEN-A-DALE

ALLEN-A-DALE has no fagot for burning,  
 Allen-a-Dale has no furrow for turning,  
 Allen-a-Dale has no fleece for the spinning,  
 Yet Allen-a-Dale has red gold for the  
 winning.

Come, read me my riddle! come, hearken  
 my tale!

And tell me the craft of bold Allen-a-Dale.

The Baron of Ravensworth prances in  
 pride,

And he views his domains upon Arkin  
 dale side.

The mere for his net and the land for his  
game,  
The chase for the wild and the park for  
the tame:  
Yet the fish of the lake and the deer of  
the vale  
Are less free to Lord Dacre than Allen-  
a-Dale!

Allen-a-Dale was ne'er belted a knight,  
Though his spur be as sharp and his blade  
be as bright;  
Allen-a-Dale is no baron or lord,  
Yet twenty tall yeomen will draw at his  
word;  
And the best of our nobles his bonnet will  
vail,  
Who at Rere-cross on Stanmore meets  
Allen-a-Dale!

Allen-a-Dale to his wooing is come;  
The mother, she asked of his household  
and home:  
"Though the castle of Richmond stand  
fair on the hill,  
My hall," quoth bold Allen, "shows  
gallanter still;  
'Tis the blue vault of heaven, with its  
crescent so pale  
And with all its bright spangles!" said  
Allen-a-Dale.

The father was steel and the mother was  
stone;  
They lifted the latch and they bade him  
be gone;  
But loud on the morrow their wail and  
their cry:  
He had laughed on the lass with his bonny  
black eye,  
And she fled to the forest to hear a love-  
tale,  
And the youth it was told by was Allen-  
a-dale!

From *Rokeby*.

### HIE AWAY, HIE AWAY

HIE away, hie away,  
Over bank and over brae,  
Where the copsewood is the greenest,  
Where the fountains glisten sheenest,  
Where the lady-fern grows strongest,  
Where the morning dew lies longest,

Where the black-cock sweetest sips it,  
Where the fairy latest trips it:  
Hie to haunts right seldom seen,  
Lovely, lonesome, cool, and green,  
Over bank and over brae,  
Hie away, hie away.

From *Waverley*, 1814.

### TWIST YE, TWINE YE! EVEN SO

Twist ye, twine ye! even so,  
Mingle shades of joy and woe,  
Hope and fear and peace and strife,  
In the thread of human life.

While the mystic twist is spinning,  
And the infant's life beginning,  
Dimly seen through twilight bending,  
Lo, what varied shapes attending!

Passions wild and follies vain,  
Pleasures soon exchanged for pain;  
Doubt and jealousy and fear,  
In the magic dance appear.

Now they wax and now they dwindle,  
Whirling with the whirling spindle,  
Twist ye, twine ye! even so,  
Mingle human bliss and woe.

From *Guy Mannering*, 1815.

### WASTED, WEARY, WHEREFORE STAY

WASTED, weary, wherefore stay,  
Wrestling thus with earth and clay?  
From the body pass away;—  
Hark! the mass is singing.

From thee doff thy mortal weed,  
Mary Mother be thy speed,  
Saints to help thee at thy need;—  
Hark! the knell is ringing.

Fear not snow-drift driving fast,  
Sleet or hail or levin blast;  
Soon the shroud shall lap thee fast,  
And the sleep be on thee cast  
That shall ne'er know waking.

Haste thee, haste thee, to be gone,  
Earth flits fast, and time draws on,—  
Gasp thy gasp, and groan thy groan,  
Day is near the breaking.

From *Guy Mannering*.

## JOCK O' HAZELDEAN

"WHY weep ye by the tide, ladie?  
 Why weep ye by the tide?  
 I'll wed ye to my youngest son,  
 And ye sall be his bride:  
 And ye sall be his bride, ladie,  
 Sae comely to be seen" —  
 But aye she loot the tears down fa'  
 For Jock o' Hazeldean.

"Now let this wilfu' grief be done,  
 And dry that cheek so pale;  
 Young Frank is chief of Errington  
 And lord of Langley-dale;  
 His step is first in peaceful ha',  
 His sword in battle keen" —  
 But aye she loot the tears down fa'  
 For Jock o' Hazeldean.

"A chain of gold ye sall not lack,  
 Nor braid to bind your hair;  
 Nor mettled hound, nor managed hawk,  
 Nor palfrey fresh and fair;  
 And you, the foremost o' them a',  
 Shall ride our forest queen." —  
 But aye she loot the tears down fa'  
 For Jock o' Hazeldean.

The kirk was decked at morning-tide,  
 The tapers glimmered fair;  
 The priest and bridegroom wait the  
 bride,  
 And dame and knight are there.  
 They sought her baith by bower and  
 ha';  
 The ladie was not seen!  
 She's o'er the Border and awa'  
 Wi' Jock o' Hazeldean. 1816.

## PIBROCH OF DONALD DHU

PIBROCH of Donuil Dhu,  
 Pibroch of Donuil,  
 Wake thy wild voice anew,  
 Summon Clan Conuil.  
 Come away, come away,  
 Hark to the summons!  
 Come in your war array,  
 Gentles and commons.

Come from deep glen and  
 From mountain so rocky,  
 The war-pipe and pennon  
 Are at Inverlochy.

Come every hill-plaid and  
 True heart that wears one,  
 Come every steel blade and  
 Strong hand that bears one.

Leave untended the herd,  
 The flock without shelter;  
 Leave the corpse uninterred,  
 The bride at the altar;  
 Leave the deer, leave the steer,  
 Leave nets and barges:  
 Come with your fighting gear,  
 Broadswords and targes.

Come as the winds come when  
 Forests are rended;  
 Come as the waves come when  
 Navies are stranded:  
 Faster come, faster come,  
 Faster and faster,  
 Chief, vassal, page and groom,  
 Tenant and master.

Fast they come, fast they come;  
 See how they gather!  
 Wide waves the eagle plume,  
 Blended with heather.  
 Cast your plaids, draw your blades,  
 Forward each man set!  
 Pibroch of Donuil Dhu,  
 Knell for the onset! 1816.

## TIME

"WHY sit'st thou by that ruined hall,  
 Thou aged carle so stern and gray?  
 Dost thou its former pride recall,  
 Or ponder how it passed away?"

"Know'st thou not me?" the Deep  
 Voice cried!

"So long enjoyed, so oft misused —  
 Alternate, in thy fickle pride,  
 Desired, neglected, and accused!

"Before my breath, like blazing flax,  
 Man and his marvels pass away!  
 And changing empires wane and wax,  
 Are founded, flourish, and decay.

"Redeem mine hours — the space is  
 brief —

While in my glass the sand-grains shiver,  
 And measureless thy joy or grief,  
 When Time and thou shalt part for-  
 ever!"

From *The Antiquary*, 1816.



## CAVALIER SONG

AND what though winter will pinch severe  
Through locks of gray and a cloak  
that's old,  
Yet keep up thy heart, bold cavalier,  
For a cup of sack shall fence the cold.

For time will rust the brightest blade,  
And years will break the strongest bow;  
Was never wight so starkly made,  
But time and years would overthrow.  
From *Old Mortality*, 1816.

## CLARION

SOUND, sound the clarion, fill the fife!  
To all the sensual world proclaim,  
One crowded hour of glorious life  
Is worth an age without a name.  
From *Old Mortality*.

THE SUN UPON THE WEIRDLAW  
HILL

"It was while struggling with such languor, on one lovely evening of this autumn [1817], that he composed the following beautiful verses. They mark the very spot of their birth, — namely, the then naked height overhanging the northern side of the Cauldshields Loch, from which Melrose Abbey to the eastward, and the hills of Ettrick and Yarrow to the west, are now visible over a wide range of rich woodland, — all the work of the poet's hand." Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, Chapter 39.

THE sun upon the Weirdlaw Hill  
In Ettrick's vale is sinking sweet;  
The westland wind is hush and still,  
The lake lies sleeping at my feet.  
Yet not the landscape to mine eye  
Bears those bright hues that once it  
bore,  
Though evening with her richest dye  
Flames o'er the hills of Ettrick's shore.

With listless look along the plain  
I see Tweed's silver current glide,  
And coldly mark the holy fane  
Of Melrose rise in ruined pride.  
The quiet lake, the balmy air,  
The hill, the stream, the tower, the  
tree —  
Are they still such as once they were,  
Or is the dreary change in me?

Alas! the warped and broken board,  
How can it bear the painter's dye?  
The harp of strained and tuneless chord,  
How to the minstrel's skill reply?  
To aching eyes each landscape lowers,  
To feverish pulse each gale blows chill;  
And Araby's or Eden's bowers  
Were barren as this moorland hill.  
1817.

## PROUD MAISIE

PROUD Maisie is in the wood,  
Walking so early;  
Sweet Robin sits on the bush,  
Singing so rarely.

"Tell me, thou bonny bird,  
When shall I marry me?"  
"When six braw gentlemen  
Kirkward shall carry ye."

"Who makes the bridal bed,  
Birdie, say truly?"  
"The gray-headed sexton  
That delves the grave duly."

"The glow-worm o'er grave and stone  
Shall light thee steady.  
The owl from the steeple sing,  
'Welcome, proud lady.'"  
From *The Heart of Midlothian*, 1818.

## TRUE-LOVE, AN THOU BE TRUE

TRUE-LOVE, an thou be true,  
Thou hast ane kittle part to play,  
For fortune, fashion, fancy, and thou  
Maun strive for many a day.

I've kend by mony a friend's tale,  
Far better by this heart of mine,  
What time and change of fancy avail,  
A true love-knot to untwine.  
From *The Bride of Lammermoor*, 1819.

## REBECCA'S HYMN

WHEN Israel of the Lord beloved  
Out from the land of bondage came,  
Her fathers' God before her moved,  
An awful guide in smoke and flame.

By day, along the astonished lands  
 The cloudy pillar glided slow ;  
 By night, Arabia's crimsoned sands  
 Returned the fiery column's glow.

There rose the choral hymn of praise,  
 And trump and timbrel answered keen,  
 And Zion's daughters poured their lays,  
 With priest's and warrior's voice between.

No portents now our foes amaze,  
 Forsaken Israel wanders lone :  
 Our fathers would not know Thy ways,  
 And Thou hast left them to their own.

But present still, though now unseen,  
 When brightly shines the prosperous day,  
 Be thoughts of Thee a cloudy screen  
 To temper the deceitful ray !  
 And O, when stoops on Judah's path  
 In shade and storm the frequent night,  
 Be Thou, long-suffering, slow to wrath,  
 A burning and a shining light !

Our harps we left by Babel's streams,  
 The tyrant's jest, the Gentile's scorn ;  
 No censor round our altar beams,  
 And mute are timbrel, harp, and horn.  
 But Thou hast said, The blood of goat,  
 The flesh of rams I will not prize ;  
 A contrite heart, a humble thought,  
 Are mine accepted sacrifice.

From *Ivanhoe*, 1818.

### BORDER BALLAD

MARCH, march, Ettrick and Teviotdale,  
 Why the deil dinna ye march forward  
 in order ?

March, march, Eskdale and Liddesdale,  
 All the Blue Bonnets are bound for the  
 border,

Many a banner spread,  
 Flutters above your head,  
 Many a crest that is famous in story,  
 Mount and make ready then,  
 Sons of the mountain glen,  
 Fight for the Queen and our old Scot-  
 tish glory.

Come from the hills where your hirsels are  
 grazing,  
 Come from the glen of the buck and the  
 roe ;

Come to the crag where the beacon is  
 blazing.

Come with the buckler, the lance, and  
 the bow.

Trumpets are sounding,  
 War-steeds are bounding,  
 Stand to your arms and march in  
 good order ;

England shall many a day  
 Tell of the bloody fray,  
 When the Blue Bonnets came over the  
 Border.

From *The Monastery*, 1820.

### LIFE

YOUTH! thou wear'st to manhood now ;  
 Darker lip and darker brow,  
 Statelier step, more pensive mien,  
 In thy face and gait are seen :  
 Thou must now brook midnight watches,  
 Take thy food and sport by snatches !  
 For the gambol and the jest  
 Thou wert wont to love the best,  
 Graver follies must thou follow,  
 But as senseless, false, and hollow.

From *The Abbot*, 1820.

### COUNTY GUY

AN! County Guy, the hour is nigh,  
 The sun has left the lea,  
 The orange flower perfumes the bower,  
 The breeze is on the sea.  
 The lark his lay who trilled all day  
 Sits hushed his partner nigh :  
 Breeze, bird, and flower confess the hour,  
 But where is County Guy ?

The village maid steals through the shade,  
 Her shepherd's suit to hear ;  
 To beauty shy by lattice high,  
 Sings high-born Cavalier.  
 The star of Love, all stars above  
 Now reigns o'er earth and sky ;  
 And high and low the influence know —  
 But where is County Guy ?

From *Quentin Durward*, 1823.

### BONNY DUNDEE

To the Lords of Convention 'twas Clav-  
 er'se who spoke,  
 "Ere the King's crown shall fall there are  
 crowns to be broke ;

So let each Cavalier who loves honor and  
me,  
Come follow the bonnet of Bonny Dun-  
dee.

Come fill up my cup, come fill up  
my can,  
Come saddle your horses and call up  
your men;  
Come open the West Port and let  
me gang free,  
And it's room for the bonnets of  
Bonny Dundee!"

Dundee he is mounted, he rides up the  
street,  
The bells are rung backward, the drums  
they are beat;  
But the Provost, douce man, said, "Just  
e'en let him be,  
The Gude Town is weel quit of that Deil  
of Dundee."  
Come fill up my cup, etc.

As he rode down the sanctified bends of  
the Bow,  
Ilk carline was flyting and shaking her  
pow;  
But the young plants of grace they looked  
couthie and slee,  
Thinking luck to thy bonnet, thou Bonny  
Dundee!  
Come fill up my cup, etc.

With sour-featured Whigs the Grass-  
market was crammed,  
As if half the West had set tryst to be  
hanged;  
There was spite in each look, there was  
fear in each e'e,  
As they watched for the bonnets of Bonny  
Dundee.  
Come fill up my cup, etc.

These cowl of Kilmarnock had spits and  
had spears,  
And lang-hafted gullies to kill cavaliers;  
But they shrunk to close-heads and the  
causeway was free,  
At the toss of the bonnet of Bonny Dun-  
dee.  
Come fill up my cup, etc.

He spurred to the foot of the proud Castle  
rock,  
And with the gay Gordon he gallantly  
spoke;

"Let Mons Meg and her marrows speak  
twa words or three,  
For the love of the bonnet of Bonny  
Dundee."  
Come fill up my cup, etc.

The Gordon demands of him which way  
he goes —  
"Where'er shall direct me the shade of  
Montrose!  
Your Grace in short space shall hear tid-  
ings of me,  
Or that low lies the bonnet of Bonny  
Dundee.  
Come fill up my cup, etc.

"There are hills beyond Pentland and  
lands beyond Forth,  
If there's lords in the Lowlands, there's  
chiefs in the North;  
There are wild Duniewassals three thou-  
sand times three,  
Will cry *hoigh!* for the bonnet of Bonny  
Dundee.  
Come fill up my cup, etc.

"There's brass on the target of barkened  
bull-hide;  
There's steel in the scabbard that dangles  
beside;  
The brass shall be burnished, the steel  
shall flash free,  
At a toss of the bonnet of Bonny Dundee.  
Come fill up my cup, etc.

"Away to the hills, to the caves, to the  
rocks —  
Ere I own an usurper, I'll couch with the  
fox;  
And tremble, false Whigs, in the midst of  
your glee,  
You have not seen the last of my bonnet  
and me!"  
Come fill up my cup, etc.

He waved his proud hand and the trump-  
ets were blown,  
The kettle-drums clashed and the horse-  
men rode on,  
Till on Ravelston's cliffs and on Cler-  
miston's lee  
Died away the wild war-notes of Bonny  
Dundee.  
Come fill up my cup, come fill up my  
can,

Come saddle the horses and call up  
the men,  
Come open your gates and let me  
gae free,  
For it's up with the bonnets of Bonny  
Dundee!

*December, 1825. 1830.*

# HERE'S A HEALTH TO KING CHARLES

BRING the bowl which you boast,  
Fill it up to the brim;  
'Tis to him we love most,  
And to all who love him. .  
Brave gallants, stand up,  
And avaunt ye, base carles!  
Were there death in the cup,  
Here's a health to King Charles.

Though he wanders through dangers,  
Unaided, unknown,  
Dependent on strangers,  
Estranged from his own;  
Though 'tis under our breath,  
Amidst forfeits and perils,  
Here's to honor and faith,  
And a health to King Charles!

Let such honors abound  
As the time can afford,  
The knee on the ground,  
And the hand on the sword;  
But the time shall come round  
When, 'mid Lords, Dukes, and Earls  
The loud trumpet shall sound,  
Here's a health to King Charles!  
*From Woodstock, 1826.*

# BYRON

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## BYRON

### LACHIN Y GAIR

AWAY, ye gay landscapes, ye gardens  
of roses!

In you let the minions of luxury rove;  
Restore me the rocks, where the snowflake  
reposes,

Though still they are sacred to freedom  
and love:

Yet, Caledonia, beloved are thy moun-  
tains,

Round their white summits though  
elements war;

Though cataracts foam 'stead of smooth-  
flowing fountains,

I sigh for the valley of dark Loch na  
Garr.

Ah! there my young footsteps in infancy  
wander'd;

My cap was the bonnet, my cloak was  
the plaid;

On chieftains long perish'd my memory  
ponder'd,

As daily I strode through the pine-  
cover'd glade;

I sought not my home till the day's dying  
glory

Gave place to the rays of the bright  
polar star;

For fancy was cheer'd by traditional story,  
Disclosed by the natives of dark Loch  
na Garr.

"Shades of the dead! have I not heard  
your voices

Rise on the night-rolling breath of the  
gale?"

Surely the soul of the hero rejoices,  
And rides on the wind, o'er his own  
Highland vale.

Round Loch na Garr while the stormy  
mist gathers,

Winter presides in his cold icy car:

Clouds there encircle the forms of my  
fathers;

They dwell in the tempests of dark  
Loch na Garr.

"Ill-starr'd, though brave, did no visions  
foreboding

Tell you that fate had forsaken your  
cause?"

Ah! were you destined to die at Culloden,  
Victory crown'd not your fall with  
applause:

Still were you happy in death's earthly  
slumber,

You rest with your clan in the caves of  
Braemar;

The pibroch resounds, to the piper's loud  
number,

Your deeds on the echoes of dark Loch  
na Garr.

Years have roll'd on, Loch na Garr, since  
I left you,

Years must elapse ere I tread you  
again:

Nature of verdure and flow'rs has bereft  
you,

Yet still are you dearer than Albion's  
plain.

England! thy beauties are tame and  
domestic

To one who has roved o'er the moun-  
tains afar:

Oh for the crags that are wild and  
majestic!

The steep frowning glories of dark  
Loch na Garr.

1807.<sup>1</sup>

### MAID OF ATHENS, ERE WE PART

*Ζώη μου, σᾶς ἀγαπῶ*

MAID of Athens, ere we part,

Give, oh, give me back my heart!

Or, since that has left my breast,

Keep it now, and take the rest!

Hear my vow before I go,

*Ζώη μου, σᾶς ἀγαπῶ.*

<sup>1</sup> The dates for Byron's poems are made up chiefly from the very full accounts of their writing and publication given in the notes to E. H. Coleridge's splendid edition.

By those tresses unconfined,  
 Woo'd by each Ægean wind;  
 By those lids whose jetty fringe  
 Kiss thy soft cheeks' blooming tinge;  
 By those wild eyes like the roe,  
 Ζῶη μου, σᾶς ἀγαπῶ.

By that lip I long to taste;  
 By that zone-encircled waist;  
 By all the token-flowers that tell  
 What words can never speak so well;  
 By love's alternate joy and woe,  
 Ζῶη μου, σᾶς ἀγαπῶ.

Maid of Athens! I am gone:  
 Think of me, sweet! when alone.  
 Though I fly to Istambol,  
 Athens holds my heart and soul;  
 Can I cease to love thee? No!  
 Ζῶη μου, σᾶς ἀγαπῶ.

1810. 1812.

#### AND THOU ART DEAD, AS YOUNG AND FAIR

"Heu, quanto minus est cum reliquis versari quam  
 tui meminisse!"

AND thou art dead, as young and fair  
 As aught of mortal birth;  
 And form so soft, and charms so rare,  
 Too soon return'd to Earth!  
 Though Earth received them in her bed  
 And o'er the spot the crowd may tread  
 In carelessness or mirth,  
 There is an eye which could not brook  
 A moment on that grave to look.

I will not ask where thou liest low,  
 Nor gaze upon the spot;  
 There flowers or weeds at will may grow,  
 So I behold them not:  
 It is enough for me to prove  
 That what I loved, and long must love,  
 Like common earth can rot;  
 To me there needs no stone to tell,  
 'Tis Nothing that I loved so well.

Yet did I love thee to the last  
 As fervently as thou,  
 Who didst not change through all the  
 past,  
 And canst not alter now.  
 The love where Death has set his seal,  
 Nor age can chill, nor rival steal,  
 Nor falsehood disavow:

And, what were worse, thou canst not  
 see  
 Or wrong, or change, or fault in me.

The better days of life were ours;  
 The worst can be but mine;  
 The sun that cheers, the storm that  
 lowers,  
 Shall never more be thine.  
 The silence of that dreamless sleep  
 I envy now too much to weep;  
 Nor need I to repine,  
 That all those charms have pass'd away;  
 I might have watch'd through long  
 decay.

The flower in ripen'd bloom unmatch'd  
 Must fall the earliest prey;  
 Though by no hand untimely snatch'd,  
 The leaves must drop away;  
 And yet it were a greater grief  
 To watch it withering leaf by leaf,  
 Than see it pluck'd to-day;  
 Since earthly eye but ill can bear  
 To trace the change to foul from fair.

I know not if I could have borne  
 To see thy beauties fade;  
 The night that follow'd such a morn  
 Had worn a deeper shade;  
 Thy day without a cloud hath pass'd,  
 And thou wert lovely to the last;  
 Extinguish'd, not decay'd;  
 As stars that shoot along the sky  
 Shine brightest as they fall from high.

As once I wept, if I could weep,  
 My tears might well be shed,  
 To think I was not near to keep  
 One vigil o'er thy bed;  
 To gaze, how fondly! on thy face,  
 To fold thee in a faint embrace,  
 Uphold thy drooping head;  
 And show that love, however vain,  
 Nor thou nor I can feel again.

Yet how much less it were to gain,  
 Though thou hast left me free,  
 The loveliest things that still remain,  
 Than thus remember thee!  
 The all of thine that cannot die  
 Through dark and dread Eternity  
 Returns again to me,  
 And more thy buried love endears  
 Than aught except its living years.

February, 1812. 1812.



## WHEN WE TWO PARTED

WHEN we two parted  
 In silence and tears,  
 Half broken-hearted  
 To sever for years,  
 Pale grew thy cheek and cold,  
 Colder thy kiss;  
 Truly that hour foretold  
 Sorrow to this.

The dew of the morning  
 Sunk chill on my brow —  
 It felt like the warning  
 Of what I feel now.  
 Thy vows are all broken,  
 And light is thy fame:  
 I hear thy name spoken,  
 And share in its shame.

They name thee before me,  
 A knell to mine ear;  
 A shudder comes o'er me —  
 Why wert thou so dear?  
 They know not I knew thee,  
 Who knew thee too well:  
 Long, long shall I rue thee,  
 Too deeply to tell.

In secret we met —  
 In silence I grieve,  
 That thy heart could forget,  
 Thy spirit deceive.  
 If I should meet thee  
 After long years,  
 How should I greet thee? —  
 With silence and tears.  
 . . . . 1816.

## THE BRIDE OF ABYDOS

## A TURKISH TALE

"Had we never loved so kindly,  
 Had we never loved so blindly,  
 Never met or never parted,  
 We had ne'er been broken-hearted." —BURNS.

## CANTO THE FIRST

KNOW ye the land where the cypress and  
 myrtle  
 Are emblems of deeds that are done in  
 their clime?  
 Where the rage of the vulture, the love of  
 the turtle,  
 Now melt into sorrow, now madden to  
 crime!

Know ye the land of the cedar and  
 vine,  
 Where the flowers ever blossom, the  
 beams ever shine:  
 Where the light wings of Zephyr, op-  
 press'd with perfume,  
 Wax faint o'er the gardens of Gúl in her  
 bloom;  
 Where the citron and olive are fairest of  
 fruit,  
 And the voice of the nightingale never is  
 mute:  
 Where the tints of the earth, and the hues  
 of the sky,  
 In color though varied, in beauty may  
 vie,  
 And the purple of ocean is deepest in dye;  
 Where the virgins are soft as the roses  
 they twine,  
 And all, save the spirit of man, is divine?  
 'Tis the clime of the East; 'tis the land  
 of the Sun —  
 Can he smile on such deeds as his chil-  
 dren have done?  
 Oh! wild as the accents of lovers' farewell  
 Are the hearts which they bear, and the  
 tales which they tell.

Begin with many a gallant slave,  
 Apparell'd as becomes the brave,  
 Awaiting each his lord's behest  
 To guide his steps, or guard his rest,  
 Old Giaffir sate in his Divan:  
 Deep thought was in his aged eye;  
 And though the face of Mussulman  
 Not oft betrays to standers by  
 The mind within, well skill'd to hide  
 All but unconquerable pride,  
 His pensive cheek and pondering brow  
 Did more than he was wont avow.

"Let the chamber be clear'd." — The  
 train disappear'd. —

"Now call me the chief of the Haram  
 guard."

With Giaffir is none but his only son,  
 And the Nubian awaiting the sire's  
 award.

"Haroun — when all the crowd that wait  
 Are pass'd beyond the outer gate,  
 (Woe to the head whose eye beheld  
 My child Zuleika's face unveil'd!)  
 Hence, lead my daughter from her tower;  
 Her fate is fix'd this very hour:  
 Yet not to her repeat my thought;  
 By me alone be duty taught!"

"Pacha! to hear is to obey."

No more must slave to despot say —  
Then to the tower had ta'en his way,  
But here young Selim silence brake,  
First lowly rendering reverence meet;  
And downcast look'd and gently spake,  
Still standing at the Pacha's feet:  
For son of Moslem must expire,  
Ere dare to sit before his sire!

"Father! for fear that thou shouldst  
chide

My sister, or her sable guide,  
Know — for the fault, if fault there be,  
Was mine, then fall thy frowns on me —  
So lovelily the morning shone,

That — let the old and weary sleep —  
I could not; and to view alone

The fairest scenes of land and deep,  
With none to listen and reply  
To thoughts with which my heart beat high  
Were irksome — for whate'er my mood,  
In sooth I love not solitude;  
I on Zuleika's slumber broke,

And, as thou knowest that for me  
Soon turns the Haram's grating key,  
Before the guardian slaves awoke  
We to the cypress groves had flown,  
And made earth, main, and heaven our  
own!

There linger'd we, beguiled too long  
With Mejnoun's tale, or Sadi's song;  
Till I, who heard the deep tambour  
Beat thy Divan's approaching hour,  
To thee, and to my duty true,  
Warn'd by the sound, to greet thee flew;  
But there Zuleika wanders yet —  
Nay, Father, rage not — nor forget  
That none can pierce that secret bower  
But those who watch the woman's tower."

"Son of a slave" — the Pacha said —  
"From unbelieving mother bred,  
Vain were a father's hope to see  
Aught that besems a man in thee.  
Thou, when thine arm should bend the  
bow,

And hurl the dart, and curb the steed,  
Thou, Greek in soul if not in creed,  
Must pore where babbling waters flow,  
And watch unfolding roses blow.  
Would that yon orb, whose matin glow  
Thy listless eyes so much admire,  
Would lend thee something of his fire!  
Thou, who wouldst see this battlement  
By Christian cannon piecemeal rent;

Nay, tamely view old Stambol's wall  
Before the dogs of Moscow fall,  
Nor strike one stroke for life and death  
Against the curs of Nazareth!  
Go — let thy less than woman's hand  
Assume the distaff — not the brand.  
But, Haroun! — to my daughter speed!  
And hark — of thine own head take  
heed —

If thus Zuleika oft takes wing —  
Thou see'st yon bow — it hath a string!"

No sound from Selim's lip was heard,  
At least that met old Giaffir's ear.  
But every frown and every word  
Pierced keener than a Christian's sword.  
"Son of a slave! — reproach'd with  
fear!

Those gibes had cost another dear.  
Son of a slave! — and *who* my sire?"  
Thus held his thoughts their dark  
career;

And glances ev'n of more than ire  
Flash forth, then faintly disappear.  
Old Giaffir gazed upon his son  
And started; for within his eye  
He read how much his wrath had done;  
He saw rebellion there begun:

"Come hither, boy — what, no reply?  
I mark thee — and I know thee too;  
But there be deeds thou dar'st not do:  
But if thy beard had manlier length,  
And if thy hand had skill and strength,  
I'd joy to see thee break a lance,  
Albeit against my own perchance."

As sneeringly these accents fell,  
On Selim's eye he fiercely gazed:  
That eye return'd him glance for glance  
And proudly to his sire's was raised,  
Till Giaffir's quail'd and shrunk  
askance —

And why — he felt, but durst not tell.  
"Much I misdoubt this wayward boy  
Will one day work me more annoy:  
I never loved him from his birth,  
And — but his arm is little worth,  
And scarcely in the chase could cope  
With timid fawn or antelope,  
Far less would venture into strife  
Where man contends for fame and life —  
I would not trust that look or tone:  
No — nor the blood so near my own.  
That blood — he hath not heard — no  
more —

I'll watch him closer than before.

He is an Arab to my sight,  
Or Christian crouching in the fight —  
But hark! — I hear Zuleika's voice;

Like Houris' hymn it meets mine ear;  
She is the offspring of my choice;

Oh! more than ev'n her mother dear,  
With all to hope, and nought to fear —  
My Peri! ever welcome here!

Sweet, as the desert fountain's wave  
To lips just cool'd in time to save —

Such to my longing sight art thou:  
Nor can they waft to Mecca's shrine  
More thanks for life, than I for thine,  
Who blest thy birth and bless thee  
now."

Fair, as the first that fell of woman-kind,

When on that dread yet lovely serpent  
smiling,  
Whose image then was stamp'd upon her  
mind —

But once beguil'd — and ever more  
beguiling;

Dazzling, as that, oh! too transcendent  
vision

To Sorrow's phantom-peopled slumber  
given,

When heart meets heart again in dreams  
Elysian,

And paints the lost on Earth revived in  
Heaven;

Soft, as the memory of buried love;  
Pure, as the prayer which Childhood  
wafts above

Was she — the daughter of that rude old  
Chief,

Who met the maid with tears — but not  
of grief.

Who hath not proved how feebly words  
essay

To fix one spark of Beauty's heavenly  
ray?

Who doth not feel, until his failing sight  
Faints into dimness with its own delight,

His changing cheek, his sinking heart  
confess

The might, the majesty of Loveliness?  
Such was Zuleika, such around her shone

The nameless charms unmark'd by her  
alone —

The light of love, the purity of grace,  
The mind, the Music breathing from her  
face,

The heart whose softness harmonized the  
whole,

And oh! that eye was in itself a Soul!

Her graceful arms in meekness bending  
Across her gently budding breast;

At one kind word those arms extending  
To clasp the neck of him who blest

His child caressing and carest,  
Zuleika came — and Giaffir felt

His purpose half within him melt:

Not that against her fancied weal

His heart though stern could ever feel;

Affection chain'd her to that heart;

Ambition tore the links apart.

"Zuleika! child of gentleness!

How dear this very day must tell,

When I forget my own distress,

In losing what I love so well,

To bid thee with another dwell:

Another! and a braver man

Was never seen in battle's van.

We Moslem reck not much of blood;

But yet the line of Carasman

Unchanged, unchangeable hath stood

First of the bold Timariot bands

That won and well can keep their lands.

Enough that he who comes to woo

Is kinsman of the Bey Oglou:

His years need scarce a thought employ;

I would not have thee wed a boy.

And thou shalt have a noble dower:

And his and my united power

Will laugh to scorn the death-firman,

Which others tremble but to scan,

And teach the messenger what fate

The bearer of such boon may wait.

And now thou know'st thy father's will:

All that thy sex hath need to know:

'Twas mine to teach obedience still —

The way to love, thy lord may show."

In silence bow'd the virgin's head;

And if her eye was fill'd with tears

That stifled feeling dare not shed,

And changed her cheek from pale to red,

And red to pale, as through her ears

Those winged words like arrows sped,

What could such be but maiden fears!

So bright the tear in Beauty's eye,

Love half regrets to kiss it dry;

So sweet the blush of Bashfulness,

Even Pity scarce can wish it less!

Whate'er it was the sire forgot;

Or if remember'd, mark'd it not;

Thrice clapp'd his hands, and call'd his  
steed,

Resign'd his gem-adorn'd chibouque,  
And mounting featly for the mead,  
With Maugrabee and Mamaluke,  
His way amid his Delis took.

To witness many an active deed  
With sabre keen, or blunt jerreed.  
The Kislar only and his Moors  
Watch well the Haram's massy doors.

His head was leant upon his hand,  
His eye look'd o'er the dark blue water

That swiftly glides and gently swells  
Between the winding Dardanelles;  
But yet he saw nor sea nor strand,  
Nor even his Pacha's turban'd band

Mix in the game of mimic slaughter,  
Careering cleave the folded felt,  
With sabre stroke right sharply dealt;  
Nor mark'd the javelin-darting crowd  
Nor heard their Ollahs wild and loud —  
He thought but of old Giaffir's  
daughter!

No word from Selim's bosom broke;  
One sigh Zuleika's thought bespoke:  
Still gazed he through the lattice grate,  
Pale, mute, and mournfully sedate.  
To him Zuleika's eye was turn'd,  
But little from his aspect learn'd:  
Equal her grief, yet not the same;  
Her heart confess'd a gentler flame:  
But yet that heart, alarm'd or weak,  
She knew not why, forbade to speak.  
Yet speak she must — but when essay?  
"How strange he thus should turn away!  
Not thus we e'er before have met;  
Nor thus shall be our parting yet."

Thrice paced she slowly through the room,  
And watch'd his eye — it still was fix'd:  
She snatch'd the urn wherein was mix'd  
The Persian Atar-gul's perfume,  
And sprinkled all its odors o'er  
The pictured roof and marble floor:  
The drops, that through his glittering vest  
The playful girl's appeal address'd,  
Unheeded o'er his bosom flew,  
As if that breast were marble too.

"What, sullen yet? it must not be —  
Oh! gentle Selim, this from thee!"  
She saw in curious order set

The fairest flowers of eastern land —  
"He loved them once: may touch them  
yet,

If offer'd by Zuleika's hand."

The childish thought was hardly  
breathed

Before the rose was pluck'd and wreathed;  
The next fond moment saw her seat  
Her fairy form at Selim's feet:

"This rose to calm my brother's cares  
A message from the Bulbul bears;  
It says to-night he will prolong  
For Selim's ear his sweetest song;  
And though his note is somewhat sad,  
He'll try for once a strain more glad,  
With some faint hope his alter'd lay  
May sing these gloomy thoughts away.

"What! not receive my foolish flower?

Nay then I am indeed unblest:  
On me can thus thy forehead lower?  
And know'st thou not who loves thee  
best?

Oh, Selim dear! oh, more than dearest!  
Say, is it me thou hat'st or fearest?  
Come, lay thy head upon my breast,  
And I will kiss thee into rest,  
Since words of mine, and songs must fail,  
Ev'n from my fabled nightingale.

I knew our sire at times was stern,  
But this from thee had yet to learn:  
Too well I know he loves thee not;  
But is Zuleika's love forgot?  
Ah! deem I right? the Pacha's plan —  
This kinsman Bey of Carasman  
Perhaps may prove some foe of thine.  
If so, I swear by Mecca's shrine, —  
If shrines that ne'er approach allow  
To woman's step, admit her vow, —  
Without thy free consent, command,  
The Sultan should not have my hand!  
Think'st thou that I could bear to part  
With thee, and learn to halve my heart?  
Ah! were I sever'd from thy side,  
Where were thy friend — and who my  
guide?

Years have not seen, Time shall not see,  
The hour that tears my soul from thee:  
Ev'n Azrael, from his deadly quiver  
When flies that shaft, and fly it must,  
That parts all else, shall doom for ever  
Our hearts to undivided dust!"

He lived, he breathed, he moved, he felt;  
He raised the maid from where she knelt;  
His trance was gone, his keen eye shone  
With thoughts that long in darkness  
dwelt:

With thoughts that burn — in rays that  
melt.



As the stream late conceal'd  
 By the fringe of its willows,  
 When it rushes reveal'd  
 In the light of its billows;  
 As the bolt bursts on high  
 From the black cloud that bound it,  
 Flash'd the soul of that eye  
 Through the long lashes round it.  
 A war-horse at the trumpet's sound,  
 A lion roused by heedless hound,  
 A tyrant waked to sudden strife  
 By graze of ill-directed knife,  
 Starts not to more convulsive life  
 Than he, who heard that vow, display'd,  
 And all, before repress'd, betray'd:  
 "Now thou art mine, for ever mine,  
 With life to keep, and scarce with life  
 resign;  
 Now thou art mine, that sacred oath,  
 Though sworn by one, hath bound us  
 both.  
 Yes, fondly, wisely hast thou done;  
 That vow hath saved more heads than  
 one:  
 But blench not thou — thy simplest  
 tress  
 Claims more from me than tenderness;  
 I would not wrong the slenderest hair  
 That clusters round thy forehead fair,  
 For all the treasures buried far  
 Within the caves of Istakur.  
 This morning clouds upon me lower'd,  
 Reproaches on my head were shower'd,  
 And Giaffir almost call'd me coward!  
 Now I have motive to be brave;  
 The son of his neglected slave,  
 Nay, start not, 'twas the term he gave,  
 May show, though little apt to vaunt,  
 A heart his words nor deeds can daunt.  
*His* son, indeed! — yet, thanks to thee,  
 Perchance I am, at least shall be;  
 But let our plighted secret vow  
 Be only known to us as now.  
 I know the wretch who dares demand  
 From Giaffir thy reluctant hand;  
 More ill-got wealth, a meaner soul  
 Holds not a Musselim's control:  
 Was he not bred in Egripo?  
 A viler race let Israel show!  
 But let that pass — to none be told  
 Our oath; the rest shall time unfold.  
 To me and mine leave Osman Bey;  
 I've partisans for peril's day:  
 Think not I am what I appear;  
 I've arms, and friends, and vengeance  
 near."

"Think not thou art what thou appearest!  
 My Selim, thou art sadly changed:  
 This morn I saw thee gentlest, dearest;  
 But now thou'rt from thyself estranged.  
 My love thou surely knew'st before,  
 It ne'er was less, nor can be more.  
 To see thee, hear thee, near thee stay,  
 And hate the night I know not why,  
 Save that we meet not but by day;  
 With thee to live, with thee to die,  
 I dare not to my hope deny:  
 Thy cheek, thine eyes, thy lips to kiss,  
 Like this — and this — no more than  
 this;  
 For, Allah! sure thy lips are flame:  
 What fever in thy veins is flushing?  
 My own have nearly caught the same,  
 At least I feel my cheek, too, blushing.  
 To soothe thy sickness, watch thy health,  
 Partake, but never waste thy wealth,  
 Or stand with smiles un murmuring by,  
 And lighten half thy poverty;  
 Do all but close thy dying eye,  
 For that I could not live to try;  
 To these alone my thoughts aspire:  
 More can I do? or thou require?  
 But, Selim, thou must answer why  
 We need so much of mystery?  
 The cause I cannot dream nor tell,  
 But be it, since thou say'st 'tis well;  
 Yet what thou mean'st by 'arms' and  
 'friends,'  
 Beyond my weaker sense extends.  
 I meant that Giaffir should have heard  
 The very vow I plighted thee;  
 His wrath would not revoke my word:  
 But surely he would leave me free.  
 Can this fond wish seem strange in me,  
 To be what I have ever been?  
 What other hath Zuleika seen  
 From simple childhood's earliest hour?  
 What other can she seek to see  
 Than thee, companion of her bower,  
 The partner of her infancy?  
 These cherish'd thoughts with life begun,  
 Say, why must I no more avow?  
 What change is wrought to make me  
 shun  
 The truth; my pride, and thine till  
 now?  
 To meet the gaze of stranger's eyes  
 Our law, our creed, our God denies;  
 Nor shall one wandering thought of mine  
 At such, our Prophet's will, repine:  
 No! happier made by that decree,  
 He left me all in leaving thee.



Deep were my anguish, thus compell'd  
 To wed with one I ne'er beheld:  
 This wherefore should I not reveal?  
 Why wilt thou urge me to conceal?  
 I know the Pacha's haughty mood  
 To thee hath never boded good;  
 And he so often storms at nought,  
 Allah! forbid that e'er he ought!  
 And why I know not, but within  
 My heart concealment weighs like sin.  
 If then such secrecy be crime,

And such it feels while lurking here;  
 Oh, Selim! tell me yet in time,  
 Nor leave me thus to thoughts of fear.  
 Ah! yonder see the Tchocadar,  
 My father leaves the mimic war;  
 I tremble now to meet his eye —  
 Say, Selim, canst thou tell me why?"

"Zuleika — to thy tower's retreat  
 Betake thee — Giaffir I can greet!  
 And now with him I fain must prate  
 Of firmans, imposts, levies, state.  
 There's fearful news from Danube's

banks,  
 Our Vizier nobly thins his ranks,  
 For which the Giaour may give him  
 thanks!

Our Sultan hath a shorter way  
 Such costly triumph to repay.  
 But, mark me, when the twilight drum  
 Hath warn'd the troops to food and  
 sleep,

Unto thy cell will Selim come:  
 Then softly from the Haram creep  
 Where we may wander by the deep:  
 Our garden battlements are steep;  
 Nor these will rash intruder climb  
 To list our words, or stint our time;  
 And if he doth, I want not steel  
 Which some have felt, and more may  
 feel.

Then shalt thou learn of Selim more  
 Than thou hast heard or thought before:  
 Trust me, Zuleika — fear not me!  
 Thou know'st I hold a Haram key."

"Fear thee, my Selim! ne'er till now  
 Did word like this —"

"Delay not thou:  
 I keep the key — and Haroun's guard  
 Have *some*, and hope of *more* reward.  
 To-night, Zuleika, thou shalt hear  
 My tale, my purpose, and my fear:  
 I am not, love! what I appear."

## CANTO THE SECOND

THE winds are high on Helle's wave,

As on that night of stormy water  
 When Love, who sent, forgot to save  
 The young, the beautiful, the brave,  
 The lonely hope of Sestos' daughter.

Oh! when alone along the sky  
 Her turret-torch was blazing high,  
 Though rising gale, and breaking foam,  
 And shrieking sea-birds warn'd him  
 home;

And clouds aloft and tides below,  
 With signs and sounds, forbade to go,  
 He could not see, he would not hear,  
 Or sound or sign foreboding fear;  
 His eye but saw that light of love,  
 The only star it hail'd above;  
 His ear but rang with Hero's song,  
 "Ye waves, divide not lovers long!" —  
 That tale is old, but love anew  
 May nerve young hearts to prove as true.

The winds are high, and Helle's tide  
 Rolls darkly heaving to the main;  
 And Night's descending shadows hide  
 That field with blood bedew'd in vain,  
 The desert of old Priam's pride;  
 The tombs, sole relics of his reign,  
 All — save immortal dreams that could  
 beguile  
 The blind old man of Scio's rocky isle!

Oh! yet — for there my steps have been;  
 These feet have press'd the sacred  
 shore,  
 These limbs that buoyant wave hath  
 borne —

Minstrel! with thee to muse, to mourn,  
 To trace again those fields of yore,  
 Believing every hillock green  
 Contains no fabled hero's ashes,  
 And that around the undoubted scene  
 Thine own "broad Hellespont" still  
 dashes,  
 Be long my lot! and cold were he  
 Who there could gaze denying thee!

The night hath closed on Helle's stream,  
 Nor yet hath risen on Ida's hill  
 That moon, which shone on his high  
 theme:

No warrior chides her peaceful beam  
 But conscious shepherds bless it still.  
 Their flocks are grazing on the mound  
 Of him who felt the Dardan's arrow:

That mighty heap of gather'd ground  
Which Ammon's son ran proudly round,  
By nations raised, by monarchs crown'd,  
Is now a lone and nameless barrow!  
Within — thy dwelling-place how narrow!

Without — can only strangers breathe  
The name of him that *was* beneath:  
Dust long outlasts the storied stone;  
But Thou — thy very dust is gone!

Late, late to-night will Dian cheer  
The swain, and chase the boatman's fear;  
Till then — no beacon on the cliff  
May shape the course of struggling skiff;  
The scatter'd lights that skirt the bay,  
All, one by one, have died away;  
The only lamp of this lone hour  
Is glimmering in Zuleika's tower.

Yes! there is light in that lone chamber,  
And o'er her silken ottoman

Are thrown the fragrant beads of amber,  
O'er which her fairy fingers ran;  
Near these, with emerald rays beset,  
(How could she thus that gem forget?)

Her mother's sainted amulet,  
Whereon engraved the Koorsee text,  
Could smooth this life, and win the next;  
And by her comboloio lies

A Koran of illumined dyes;  
And many a bright emblazon'd rhyme  
By Persian scribes redeem'd from time;  
And o'er those scrolls, not oft so mute,  
Reclines her now neglected lute;

And round her lamp of fretted gold  
Bloom flowers in urns of China's mould;  
The richest work of Iran's loom,  
And Sheeraz, tribute of perfume;

All that can eye or sense delight  
Are gather'd in that gorgeous room:  
But yet it hath an air of gloom  
She, of this Peri cell the sprite,  
What doth she hence, and on so rude a  
night?

Wrapt in the darkest sable vest,  
Which none save noblest Moslem wear,  
To guard from winds of heaven the breast  
As heaven itself to Selim dear,  
With cautious steps the thicket threading,  
And starting oft, as through the glade  
The gust its hollow moanings made,  
Till on the smoother pathway treading,  
More free her timid bosom beat,

The maid pursued her silent guide;  
And though her terror urged retreat,

How could she quit her Selim's side?  
How teach her tender lips to chide?

They reach'd at length a grotto, hewn  
By nature, but enlarged by art,  
Where oft her lute she wont to tune,  
And oft her Koran conn'd apart;  
And oft in youthful reverie  
She dream'd what Paradise might be:  
Where woman's parted soul shall go  
Her Prophet had disdain'd to show;  
But Selim's mansion was secure,  
Nor deem'd she, could he long endure  
His bower in other worlds of bliss  
Without *her*, most beloved in this!  
Oh! who so dear with him could dwell?  
What Houri soothe him half so well?

Since last she visited the spot  
Some change seem'd wrought within the  
grot:

It might be only that the night  
Disguised things seen by better light:  
That brazen lamp but dimly threw  
A ray of no celestial hue;  
But in a nook within the cell  
Her eye on stranger objects fell.  
There arms were piled, not such as wield  
The turban'd Delis in the field;  
But brands of foreign blade and hilt,  
And one was red — perchance with guilt!  
Ah! how without can blood be spilt?  
A cup too on the board was set.  
That did not seem to hold sherbet.  
What may this mean? she turn'd to see  
Her Selim — "Oh! can this be he?"

His robe of pride was thrown aside,  
His brow no high-crown'd turban bore,  
But in its stead a shawl of red,  
Wreathed lightly round, his temples  
wore:

That dagger, on whose hilt the gem  
Were worthy of a diadem,  
No longer glitter'd at his waist,  
Where pistols unadorn'd were braced;  
And from his belt a sabre swung,  
And from his shoulder loosely hung  
The cloak of white, the thin capote  
That decks the wandering Candiote;  
Beneath — his golden plated vest  
Clung like a cuirass to his breast;  
The greaves below his knee that wound  
With silvery scales were sheathed and  
bound.

But were it not that high command  
Spake in his eye, and tone, and hand,  
All that a careless eye could see  
In him was some young Galiongée.<sup>1</sup>  
"I said I was not what I seem'd;

And now thou see'st my words were  
true:

I have a tale thou hast not dream'd,  
If sooth — its truth must others rue.  
My story now 'twere vain to hide,  
I must not see thee Osman's bride:  
But had not thine own lips declared  
How much of that young heart I shared,  
I could not, must not, yet have shown  
The darker secret of my own.  
In this I speak not now of love;  
That, let time, truth, and peril prove;  
But first — Oh! never wed another —  
Zuleika! I am not thy brother!"

"Oh! not my brother! — yet unsay —  
God! am I left alone on earth  
To mourn — I dare not curse — the day  
That saw my solitary birth?"

Oh! thou wilt love me now no more!  
My sinking heart foreboded ill;  
But know *me* all I was before,  
Thy sister — friend — Zuleika still.  
Thou led'st me here perchance to kill;  
If thou hast cause for vengeance, see!  
My breast is offer'd — take thy fill!

Far better with the dead to be  
Than live thus nothing now to thee!  
Perhaps far worse, for now I know  
Why Giaffir alway seem'd thy foe;  
And I, alas! am Giaffir's child,  
For whom thou wert contemn'd, reviled.  
If not thy sister — wouldst thou save  
My life, oh! bid me be thy slave!"

"My slave, Zuleika! — nay, I'm thine:  
But, gentle love, this transport calm,  
Thy lot shall yet be link'd with mine;  
I swear it by our Prophet's shrine,  
And be that thought thy sorrow's balm.  
So may the Koran verse display'd  
Upon its steel direct my blade,  
In danger's hour to guard us both,  
As I preserve that awful oath!  
The name in which thy heart hath  
prided

Must change; but, my Zuleika, know,  
That tie is widen'd, not divided,  
Although thy Sire's my deadliest foe.

My father was to Giaffir all  
That Selim late was deem'd to thee:  
That brother wrought a brother's fall,

But spared, at least, my infancy;  
And lull'd me with a vain deceit  
That yet a like return may meet.  
He rear'd me, not with tender help,  
But like the nephew of a Cain;  
He watched me like a lion's whelp,  
That gnaws and yet may break his  
chain.

My father's blood in every vein  
Is boiling; but for thy dear sake  
No present vengeance will I take;  
Though here I must no more remain.  
But first, beloved Zuleika! hear  
How Giaffir wrought this deed of fear.

"How first their strife to rancor grew,  
If love or envy made them foes,  
It matters little if I knew;  
In fiery spirits, slights, though few  
And thoughtless, will disturb repose.  
In war Abdallah's arm was strong,  
Remember'd yet in Bosniac song,  
And Paswan's rebel hordes attest  
How little love they bore such guest:  
His death is all I need relate,  
The stern effect of Giaffir's hate;  
And how my birth disclosed to me,  
Whate'er beside it makes, hath made me  
free.

"When Paswan, after years of strife,  
At last for power, but first for life,  
In Widdin's walls too proudly sate,  
Our Pachas rallied round the state;  
Nor last nor least in high command,  
Each brother led a separate band;  
They gave their horse-tails<sup>1</sup> to the wind,  
And mustering in Sophia's plain  
Their tents were pitch'd, their post  
assign'd;

To one, alas! assign'd in vain!  
What need of words! the deadly bowl,  
By Giaffir's order drugged and given,  
With venom subtle as his soul,  
Dismiss'd Abdallah's hence to heaven.  
Reclined and feverish in the bath,  
He, when the hunter's sport was up,  
But little deem'd a brother's wrath  
To quench his thirst had such a cup:  
The bowl a bribed attendant bore;  
He drank one draught, nor needed more!

<sup>1</sup> A Turkish sailor.

<sup>1</sup> "Horse-tail," the standard of a pacha. (*Byron*)

If thou my tale, Zuleika, doubt,  
Call Haroun — he can tell it out.

“The deed once done, and Paswan’s feud  
In part suppress’d, though ne’er subdued,

Abdallah’s Pachalick was gain’d : —  
Thou know’st not what in our Divan  
Can wealth procure for worse than man —  
Abdallah’s honors were obtain’d  
By him a brother’s murder stain’d;  
’Tis true, the purchase nearly drain’d  
Has ill got treasure, soon replaced.  
Wouldst question whence? Survey the  
waste,

And ask the squalid peasant how  
His gains repay his broiling brow! —  
Why me the stern usurper spared,  
Why thus with me his palace shared,  
I know not. Shame, regret, remorse,  
And little fear from infant’s force;  
Besides, adoption as a son  
By him whom Heaven accorded none,  
Or some unknown cabal, caprice,  
Preserved me thus; — but not in peace:  
He cannot curb his haughty mood,  
Nor I forgive a father’s blood.

“Within thy father’s house are foes;  
Not all who break his bread are true;  
To these should I my birth disclose,  
His days, his very hours were few;  
They only want a heart to lead,  
A hand to point them to the deed.

But Haroun only knows, or knew,  
This tale, whose close is almost nigh:  
He in Abdallah’s palace grew,  
And held that post in his Serai  
Which holds he here — he saw him die;  
But what could single slavery do?  
Avenge his lord? alas! too late;  
Or save his son from such a fate?  
He chose the last, and when elate

With foes subdued, or friends betray’d,  
Proud Giaffir in high triumph sate,  
He led me helpless to his gate,

And not in vain it seems essay’d  
To save the life for which he pray’d.  
The knowledge of my birth secured  
From all and each, but most from me;  
Thus Giaffir’s safety was insured.

Removed he too from Roumelie  
To this our Asiatic side,  
Far from our seats by Danube’s tide,

With none but Haroun, who retains  
Such knowledge — and that Nubian feels  
A tyrant’s secrets are but chains,

From which the captive gladly steals,  
And this and more to me reveals:  
Such still to guilt just Alla sends —  
Slaves, tools, accomplices — no friends!

“All this, Zuleika, harshly sounds;  
But harsher still my tale must be:  
Howe’er my tongue thy softness wounds,  
Yet I must prove all truth to thee.

I saw thee start this garb to see,  
Yet is it one I oft have worn,  
And long must wear: this Galiongée,  
To whom thy plighted vow is sworn,  
Is leader of those pirate hordes,  
Whose laws and lives are on their  
swords;

To hear whose desolating tale  
Would make thy waning cheek more  
pale:

Those arms thou see’st my band have  
brought.

The hands that wield are not remote;  
This cup too for the rugged knaves  
Is fill’d — once quaff’d, they ne’er  
repine:

Our prophet might forgive the slaves;  
They’re only infidels in wine.

“What could I be? Proscribed at home,  
And taunted to a wish to roam;  
And listless left — for Giaffir’s fear  
Denied the courser and the spear —  
Though oft — Oh, Mahomet! how oft —  
In full Divan the despot scoff’d,  
As if my weak unwilling hand  
Refused the bridle or the brand:  
He ever went to war alone,  
And pent me here untried — unknown;  
To Haroun’s care with women left.  
By hope unblest, of fame bereft,  
While thou — whose softness long en-  
dear’d,

Though it unmann’d me, still had  
cheer’d —

To Brusa’s walls for safety sent,  
Awaited’st there the field’s event.  
Haroun, who saw my spirit pining  
Beneath inaction’s sluggish yoke,  
His captive, though with dread resigning,  
My thralldom for a season broke,  
On promise to return before  
The day when Giaffir’s charge was o’er.  
’Tis vain — my tongue cannot impart  
My almost drunkenness of heart,  
When first this liberated eye  
Survey’d Earth, Ocean, Sun, and Sky,



As if my spirit pierced them through,  
 And all their inmost wonders knew!  
 One word alone can paint to thee  
 That more than feeling — I was Free!  
 E'en for thy presence ceased to pine;  
 The World — nay, Heaven itself was  
 mine!

"The shallop of a trusty Moor  
 Convey'd me from this idle shore;  
 I long'd to see the isles that gem  
 Old Ocean's purple diadem:  
 I sought by turns, and saw them all;  
 But when and where I join'd the crew,  
 With whom I'm pledged to rise or fall,  
 When all that we design to do  
 Is done, 'twill then be time more meet  
 To tell thee, when the tale's complete.

"'Tis true, they are a lawless brood,  
 But rough in form, nor mild in mood;  
 And every creed, and every race,  
 With them hath found — may find a  
 place;  
 But open speech, and ready hand,  
 Obedience to their chief's command;  
 A soul for every enterprise,  
 That never sees with terror's eyes;  
 Friendship for each, and faith to all,  
 And vengeance vow'd for those who fall,  
 Have made them fitting instruments  
 For more than ev'n my own intents.  
 And some — and I have studied all  
 Distinguish'd from the vulgar rank,  
 But chiefly to my council call  
 The wisdom of the cautious Frank —  
 And some to higher thoughts aspire,  
 The last of Lambro's patriots there  
 Anticipated freedom share;  
 And oft around the cavern fire  
 On visionary schemes debate,  
 To snatch the Rayahs from their fate.  
 So let them ease their hearts with prate  
 Of equal rights, which man ne'er knew;  
 I have a love for freedom too.  
 Ay! let me like the ocean-Patriarch roam  
 Or only know on land the Tartar's home!  
 My tent on shore, my galley on the sea,  
 Are more than cities and Serais to me:  
 Borne by my steed, or wafted by my  
 sail,  
 Across the desert, or before the gale,  
 Bound where thou wilt, my barb! or  
 glide, my prow!  
 But be the star that guides the wanderer,  
 Thou!

Thou, my Zuleika, share and bless my  
 bark;  
 The Dove of peace and promise to mine  
 ark!  
 Or, since that hope denied in worlds of  
 strife,  
 Be thou the rainbow to the storms of life!  
 The evening beam that smiles the clouds  
 away,  
 And tints to-morrow with prophetic ray!  
 Blest — as the Muezzin's strain from  
 Mecca's wall  
 To pilgrims pure and prostrate at his  
 call:  
 Soft — as the melody of youthful days,  
 That steals the trembling tear of speech-  
 less praise;  
 Dear — as his native song to Exile's ears,  
 Shall sound each tone thy long-loved  
 voice endears.  
 For thee in those bright isles is built a  
 bower  
 Blooming as Aden in its earliest hour.  
 A thousand swords, with Selim's heart  
 and hand,  
 Wait — wave — defend — destroy — at  
 thy command!  
 Girt by my band, Zuleika at my side,  
 The spoil of nations shall bedeck my  
 bride.  
 The Haram's languid years of listless ease  
 Are well resign'd for cares — for joys like  
 these:  
 Not blind to fate, I see, where'er I rove,  
 Unnumber'd perils — but one only love!  
 Yet well my toils shall that fond breast  
 repay,  
 Though fortune frown, or falser friends  
 betray.  
 How dear the dream in darkest hours of  
 ill,  
 Should all be changed, to find thee faith-  
 ful still!  
 Be but thy soul, like Selim's, firmly  
 shown;  
 To thee be Selim's tender as thine own;  
 To soothe each sorrow: share in each  
 delight,  
 Blend every thought, do all — but dis-  
 unite!  
 Once free, 'tis mine our horde again to  
 guide;  
 Friends to each other, foes to aught be-  
 side:  
 Yet there we follow but the bent assign'd  
 By fatal Nature to man's warring kind:



Mark! where his carnage and his conquests cease!  
 He makes a solitude, and calls it — peace!  
 I, like the rest, must use my skill or strength,  
 But ask no land beyond my sabre's length:  
 Power sways but by division — her resource  
 The blest alternative of fraud or force!  
 Ours be the last; in time deceit may come  
 When cities cage us in a social home:  
 There ev'n thy soul might err — how oft the heart  
 Corruption shakes which peril could not part!  
 And woman, more than man, when Death or Woe,  
 Or even Disgrace, would lay her lover low,  
 Sunk in the lap of Luxury will shame —  
 Away suspicion! — *not* Zuleika's name!  
 But life is hazard at the best; and here  
 No more remains to win, and much to fear:  
 Yes, fear! the doubt, the dread of losing thee,  
 By Osman's power, and Giaffir's stern decree.  
 That dread shall vanish with the favouring gale,  
 Which Love to-night hath promised to my sail:  
 No danger daunts the pair his smile hath blest,  
 Their steps still roving, but their hearts at rest.  
 With thee all toils are sweet, each clime hath charms;  
 Earth — sea alike — our world within our arms!  
 Ay — let the loud winds whistle o'er the deck,  
 So that those arms cling closer round my neck:  
 The deepest murmur of this lip shall be,  
 No sigh for safety, but a prayer for thee!  
 The war of elements no fears impart  
 To Love, whose deadliest bane is human Art:  
*There* lie the only rocks our course can check;  
*Here* moments menace — *there* are years of wreck!  
 But hence ye thoughts that rise in Horror's shape!  
 This hour bestows, or ever bars, escape.

Few words remain of mine my tale to close;  
 Of thine but *one* to waft us from our foes;  
 Yea — foes — to me will Giaffir's hate decline?  
 And is not Osman, who would part us, thine?

“His head and faith from doubt and death

Return'd in time my guard to save;  
 Few heard, none told, that o'er the wave  
 From isle to isle I roved the while;  
 And since, though parted from my band,  
 Too seldom now I leave the land,  
 No deed they've done, nor deed shall do,  
 Ere I have heard and doom'd it too:  
 I form the plan, decree the spoil,  
 'Tis fit I oftener share the toil.  
 But now too long I've held thine ear;  
 Time presses, floats my bark, and here  
 We leave behind but hate and fear.  
 To-morrow Osman with his train  
 Arrives — to-night must break thy chain:  
 And wouldst thou save that haughty Bey, —

Perchance *his* life who gave thee thine, —

With me this hour away — away!

But yet, though thou art plighted mine,  
 Wouldst thou recall thy willing vow,  
 Appall'd by truths imparted now,  
 Here rest I — not to see thee wed:  
 But be that peril on *my* head!”

Zuleika, mute and motionless,  
 Stood like that statue of distress,  
 When, her last hope for ever gone,  
 The mother harden'd into stone:  
 All in the maid that eye could see  
 Was but a younger Niobè.  
 But ere her lip, or even her eye,  
 Essay'd to speak, or look reply,  
 Beneath the garden's wicket porch  
 Far flash'd on high a blazing torch!  
 Another — and another — and another —  
 “Oh! fly — no more — yet now my more than brother!”

Far, wide, through every thicket spread  
 The fearful lights are gleaming red;  
 Nor these alone — for each right hand  
 Is ready with a sheathless brand.  
 They part, pursue, return, and wheel  
 With searching flambeau, shining steel;  
 And last of all, his sabre waving,  
 Stern Giaffir in his fury raving:

And now almost they touch the cave —  
Oh! must that grot be Selim's grave?

Dauntless he stood — "'Tis come — soon  
past —

One kiss, Zuleika — 'tis my last :

But yet my band not far from shore  
May hear this signal, see the flash ;  
Yet now too few — the attempt were  
rash :

No matter — yet one effort more."  
Forth to the cavern mouth he stept ;  
His pistol's echo rang on high,  
Zuleika started not, nor wept,  
Despair benumb'd her breast and  
eye! —

"They hear me not, or if they ply  
Their oars 'tis but to see me die ;  
That sound hath drawn my foes more  
nigh.

Then forth my father's scimitar,  
Thou ne'er hast seen less equal war!  
Farewell, Zuleika! — sweet! retire :

Yet stay within — here linger safe,  
At thee his rage will only chafe.  
Stir not — lest even to thee perchance  
Some erring blade or ball should glance.  
Fear'st thou for him? — may I expire  
If in this strife I seek thy sire!  
No — though by him that poison pour'd ;  
No — though again he call me coward!  
But tamely shall I meet their steel?  
No — as each crest save *his* may feel!"

One bound he made, and gain'd the sand :  
Already at his feet hath sunk  
The foremost of the prying band,

A gasping head, a quivering trunk :  
Another falls — but round him close  
A swarming circle of his foes ;  
From right to left his path he cleft,

And almost met the meeting wave :  
His boat appears — not five oars'  
length —

His comrades strain with desperate  
strength —

Oh! are they yet in time to save?  
His feet the foremost breakers lave ;  
His band are plunging in the bay,  
Their sabres glitter through the spray ;  
Wet — wild — unwearied to the strand  
They struggle — now they touch the  
land!

They come — 'tis but to add to  
slaughter —  
His heart's best blood is on the water.

Escaped from shot, unharm'd by steel,  
Or scarcely grazed its force to feel,  
Had Selim won, betray'd, beset,  
To where the strand and billows met ;  
There as his last step left the land —  
And the last death-blow dealt his hand —  
Ah! wherefore did he turn to look  
For her his eye but sought in vain?  
That pause, that fatal gaze he took,  
Hath doom'd his death, or fix'd his  
chain.

Sad proof, in peril and in pain,  
How late will Lover's hope remain!  
His back was to the dashing spray :  
Behind, but close, his comrades lay,  
When, at the instant, hiss'd the ball —  
"So may the foes of Giaffir fall!"  
Whose voice is heard? whose carbine  
rang?

Whose bullet through the night-air sang,  
Too nearly, deadly aim'd to err?  
'Tis thine — Abdallah's Murderer!  
The father slowly rued thy hate,  
The son hath found a quicker fate :  
Fast from his breast the blood is bubbling,  
The whiteness of the sea foam troubling —  
If aught his lips essay'd to groan,  
The rushing billows choked the tone!

Morn slowly rolls the clouds away ;  
Few trophies of the fight are there :  
The shouts that shook the midnight-bay  
Are silent ; but some signs of fray  
That strand of strife may bear,  
And fragments of each shiver'd brand  
Steps stamp'd ; and dash'd into the  
sand

The print of many a struggling hand  
May there be mark'd ; nor far remote  
A broken torch, an oarless boat ;  
And tangled on the weeds that heap  
The beach where shelving to the deep  
There lies a white capote!

'Tis rent in twain — one dark-red stain  
The wave yet ripples o'er in vain ;  
But where is he who wore?

Ye! who would o'er his relics weep,  
Go, seek them where the surges sweep  
Their burthen round Sigæum's steep

And cast on Lemnos' shore :  
The sea-birds shriek above the prey,  
O'er which their hungry beaks delay,  
As shaken on his restless pillow,  
His head heaves with the heaving billow ;  
That hand, whose motion is not life,  
Yet feebly seems to menace strife,

Flung by the tossing tide on high,  
 Then levell'd with the wave —  
 What reck's it, though that corse shall lie  
 Within a living grave?  
 The bird that tears that prostrate form  
 Hath only robb'd the meaner worm;  
 The only heart, the only eye  
 Had bled or wept to see him die,  
 Had seen those scatter'd limbs composed,  
 And mourn'd above his turban-stone,  
 That heart hath burst — that eye was  
 closed —  
 Yea — closed before his own!

By Helle's stream there is a voice of wail!  
 And woman's eye is wet — man's cheek  
 is pale:

Zuleika! last of Giaffir's race,  
 Thy destined lord is come too late:  
 He sees not — ne'er shall see thy face!

Can he not hear  
 The loud Wul-wulleh warn his distant ear?  
 Thy handmaids weeping at the gate,  
 The Koran-chanters of the hymn of fate,  
 The silent slaves with folded arms that  
 wait,

Sighs in the hall, and shrieks upon the gale,  
 Tell him thy tale!

Thou didst not view thy Selim fall!  
 That fearful moment when he left the  
 cave

Thy heart grew chill:  
 He was thy hope — thy joy — thy love  
 — thine all,

And that last thought on him thou couldst  
 not save

Sufficed to kill;  
 Burst forth in one wild cry — and all was  
 still.

Peace to thy broken heart, and virgin  
 grave!

Ah! happy! but of life to lose the worst!  
 That grief — though deep — though fatal  
 — was thy first!

Thrice happy ne'er to feel nor fear the  
 force

Of absence, shame, pride, hate, revenge,  
 remorse!

And, oh! that pang where more than  
 madness lies!

The worm that will not sleep — and never  
 dies;

Thought of the gloomy day and ghastly  
 night,

That dreads the darkness, and yet loathes  
 the light,

That winds around, and tears the quiver-  
 ing heart!

Ah! wherefore not consume it — and  
 depart!

Woe to thee, rash and unrelenting chief!  
 Vainly thou heap'st the dust upon thy  
 head,

Vainly the sackcloth o'er thy limbs dost  
 spread:

By that same hand Abdallah — Selim:  
 bled.

Now let it tear thy beard in idle grief.  
 Thy pride of heart, thy bride for Osman's  
 bed,

She, whom thy sultan had but seen to wed,  
 Thy Daughter's dead!

Hope of thine age, thy twilight's lonely  
 beam,

The Star hath set that shone on Helle's  
 stream.

What quench'd its ray? — the blood that  
 thou hast shed!

Hark! to the hurried question of Despair:  
 "Where is my child?" — an Echo an-  
 swers — "Where?"

Within the place of thousand tombs  
 That shine beneath, while dark above

The sad but living cypress glooms  
 And withers not, though branch and  
 leaf

Are stamp'd with an eternal grief,  
 Like early unrequited Love,  
 One spot exists, which ever blooms,  
 Ev'n in that deadly grove —

A single rose is shedding there  
 Its lonely lustre, meek and pale:

It looks as planted by Despair —  
 So white — so faint — the slightest gale

Might whirl the leaves on high:  
 And yet, though storms and blight

assail,  
 And hands more rude than wintry sky

May wring it from the stem — in  
 vain —

To-morrow sees it bloom again:  
 The stalk some spirit gently rears,

And waters with celestial tears,  
 For well may maids of Helle deem

That this can be no earthly flower,  
 Which mocks the tempest's withering  
 hour,

And buds unshelter'd by a bower;  
 Nor droops though Spring refuse her

shower,  
 Nor woos the summer beam:

To it the livelong night there sings  
 A bird unseen — but not remote :  
 Invisible his airy wings,  
 But soft as harp that Houri strings  
 His long entrancing note !  
 It were the Bulbul ; but his throat,  
 Though mournful, pours not such a  
 strain :

For they who listen cannot leave  
 The spot, but linger there and grieve,  
 As if they loved in vain !  
 And yet so sweet the tears they shed,  
 'Tis sorrow so unmix'd with dread,  
 They scarce can bear the morn to break  
 That melancholy spell,  
 And longer yet would weep and wake,  
 He sings so wild and well !  
 But when the day-blush bursts from high  
 Expires that magic melody.

And some have been who could believe,  
 (So fondly youthful dreams deceive,  
 Yet harsh be they that blame,)   
 That note so piercing and profound  
 Will shape and syllable its sound  
 Into Zuleika's name.

'Tis from her cypress summit heard,  
 That melts in air the liquid word :  
 'Tis from her lowly virgin earth  
 That white rose takes its tender birth.  
 There late was laid a marble stone ;  
 Eve saw it placed — the Morrow gone !  
 It was no mortal arm that bore  
 That deep-fix'd pillar to the shore ;  
 For there, as Helle's legends tell,  
 Next morn 'twas found where Selim fell ;  
 Lash'd by the tumbling tide, whose wave  
 Denied his bones a holier grave ;  
 And there by night, reclined, 'tis said,  
 Is seen a ghastly turban'd head :

And hence extended by the billow,  
 'Tis named the "Pirate-phantom's pil-  
 low !"

Where first it lay that mourning flower  
 Hath flourish'd ; flourisheth this hour,  
 Alone and dewy, coldly pure and pale ;  
 As weeping Beauty's cheek at Sorrow's  
 tale !

*November, 1813. November 29, 1813.*

#### ODE TO NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE

"Expende Annibalem: — quot libras in duce  
 summo  
 Invenies?"

JUVENAL, *Sat. x.*

'Tis done — but yesterday a King !  
 And arm'd with Kings to strive —

And now thou art a nameless thing :  
 So abject — yet alive !  
 Is this the man of thousand thrones,  
 Who strew'd our earth with hostile bones,  
 And can he thus survive ?  
 Since he, miscalled the Morning Star,  
 Nor man nor fiend hath fallen so far.

Ill-minded man ! why scourge thy kind  
 Who bow'd so low the knee ?  
 By grazing on thyself grown blind,  
 Thou taught'st the rest to see.  
 With might unquestion'd, — power to  
 save, —  
 Thine only gift hath been the grave,  
 To those that worshipp'd thee ;  
 Nor till thy fall could mortals guess  
 Ambition's less than littleness !

Thanks for that lesson — It will teach  
 To after-warriors more  
 Than high Philosophy can preach,  
 And vainly preach'd before.  
 That spell upon the minds of men  
 Breaks never to unite again,  
 That led them to adore  
 Those Pagod things of sabre sway  
 With fronts of brass, and feet of clay.

The triumph and the vanity,  
 The rapture of the strife —  
 The earthquake voice of Victory,  
 To thee the breath of life ;  
 The sword, the sceptre, and that sway  
 Which man seem'd made but to obey,  
 Wherewith renown was rife —  
 All quell'd ! — Dark Spirit ! what must be  
 The madness of thy memory !

The Desolator desolate !  
 The Victor overthrown !  
 The Arbiter of others' fate  
 A Suppliant for his own !  
 Is it some yet imperial hope  
 That with such change can calmly cope ?  
 Or dread of death alone ?  
 To die a prince — or live a slave —  
 Thy choice is most ignobly brave !

He who of old would rend the oak,  
 Dream'd not of the rebound :  
 Chain'd by the trunk he vainly broke —  
 Alone — how look'd he round ?  
 Thou, in the sternness of thy strength,  
 An equal deed hast done at length,  
 And darker fate hast found :



He fell, the forest prowlers' prey;  
But thou must eat thy heart away!

The Roman, when his burning heart  
Was slaked with blood of Rome,  
Threw down the dagger — dared depart,  
In savage grandeur, home —  
He dared depart in utter scorn  
Of men that such a yoke had borne,  
Yet left him such a doom!  
His only glory was that hour  
Of self-upheld abandon'd power.

The Spaniard,<sup>1</sup> when the lust of sway  
Had lost its quickening spell,  
Cast crowns for rosaries away,  
An empire for a cell;  
A strict accountant of his beads,  
A subtle disputant on creeds,  
His dotage trifled well:  
Yet better had he neither known  
A bigot's shrine, nor despot's throne.

But thou — from thy reluctant hand  
The thunderbolt is wrung —  
Too late thou leav'st the high command  
To which thy weakness clung;  
All Evil Spirit as thou art,  
It is enough to grieve the heart  
To see thine own unstrung;  
To think that God's fair world hath been  
The footstool of a thing so mean;

And Earth hath spilt her blood for  
him,  
Who thus can hoard his own!  
And Monarchs bow'd the trembling limb,  
And thank'd him for a throne!  
Fair Freedom! we may hold thee dear,  
When thus thy mightiest foes their fear  
In humblest guise have shown.  
Oh! ne'er may tyrant leave behind  
A brighter name to lure mankind!

Thine evil deeds are writ in gore  
Nor written thus in vain —  
Thy triumphs tell of fame no more,  
Or deepen every stain:  
If thou hadst died as honor dies,  
Some new Napoleon might arise,  
To shame the world again —  
But who should soar the solar height,  
To set in such a starless night?

<sup>1</sup> The Emperor Charles V.

Weigh'd in the balance, hero dust  
Is vile as vulgar clay;  
Thy scales, Mortality! are just  
To all that pass away:  
But yet methought the living great  
Some higher sparks should animate,  
To dazzle and dismay:  
Nor deem'd Contempt could thus make  
mirth  
Of these, the Conquerors of the earth.

And she, proud Austria's mournful flower,  
Thy still imperial bride;  
How bears her breast the torturing  
hour?  
Still clings she to thy side?  
Must she too bend, must she too share  
Thy late repentance, long despair,  
Thou throneless Homicide?  
If still she loves thee, hoard that gem, —  
'Tis worth thy vanish'd diadem!

Then haste thee to thy sullen Isle,  
And gaze upon the sea;  
That element may meet thy smile —  
It ne'er was ruled by thee!  
Or trace with thine all idle hand  
In loitering mood upon the sand  
That Earth is now as free!  
That Corinth's pedagogue<sup>1</sup> hath now  
Transferr'd his by-word to thy brow.

Thou Timour! in his captive's cage  
What thoughts will there be thine,  
While brooding in thy prison'd rage?  
But one — "The world *was* mine!"  
Unless, like he of Babylon,  
All sense is with thy sceptre gone,  
Life will not long confine  
That spirit pour'd so widely forth —  
So long obey'd — so little worth!

Or, like the thief of fire from heaven,  
Wilt thou withstand the shock?  
And share with him, the unforgiven,  
His vulture and his rock!  
Foredoom'd by God — by man accurst,  
And that last act, though not thy  
worst,  
The very Fiend's arch mock;  
He in his fall preserved his pride  
And, if a mortal, had as proudly died!

<sup>1</sup> Dionysius the younger, tyrant of Syracuse, who after his second banishment earned his living by teaching, in Corinth.



There was a day — there was an hour,  
 While earth was Gaul's — Gaul thine —  
 When that immeasurable power  
   Unsated to resign  
 Had been an act of purer fame  
 Than gathers round Marengo's name,  
 And gilded thy decline,  
 Through the long twilight of all time,  
 Despite some passing clouds of crime.

But thou forsooth must be a king,  
 And don the purple vest,  
 As if that foolish robe could wring  
   Remembrance from thy breast.  
 Where is that faded garment? where  
 The gewgaws thou wert fond to wear,  
 The star, the string, the crest?  
 Vain froward child of empire! say,  
 Are all thy playthings snatched away?

Where may the wearied eye repose  
 When gazing on the Great;  
 Where neither guilty glory glows,  
 Nor despicable state?  
 Yes — one — the first — the last — the  
   best —

The Cincinnatus of the West,  
 Whom envy dared not hate,  
 Bequeath'd the name of Washington,  
 To make man blush there was but one!  
*April 9-10, 1814. April 16, 1814.*

### SHE WALKS IN BEAUTY

SHE walks in beauty, like the night  
 Of cloudless climes and starry skies;  
 And all that's best of dark and bright  
 Meet in her aspect and her eyes:  
 Thus mellow'd to that tender light  
   Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

One shade the more, one ray the less,  
 Had half impair'd the nameless grace  
 Which waves in every raven tress,  
 Or softly lightens o'er her face;  
 Where thoughts serenely sweet express  
   How pure, how dear their dwelling-  
   place.

And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,  
 So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,  
 The smiles that win, the tints that glow,  
 But tell of days in goodness spent,  
 A mind at peace with all below,  
 A heart whose love is innocent!

*June 12, 1814. 1815.*

### OH! SNATCH'D AWAY IN BEAUTY'S BLOOM

OH! snatch'd away in beauty's bloom,  
 On thee shall press no ponderous tomb;  
 But on thy turf shall roses rear  
   Their leaves, the earliest of the year;  
 And the wild cypress wave in tender  
   gloom:

And oft by yon blue gushing stream  
 Shall Sorrow lean her drooping head,  
 And feed deep thought with many a  
   dream,  
 And lingering pause and lightly tread;  
 Fond wretch! as if her step disturb'd  
   the dead!

Away! we know that tears are vain,  
 That death nor heeds nor hears dis-  
   tress:

Will this unteach us to complain?  
 Or make one mourner weep the less?  
 And thou — who tell'st me to forget,  
 Thy looks are wan, thine eyes are wet.  
*1814 or 1815. April 23, 1815.*

### THE DESTRUCTION OF SENNACHERIB

THE Assyrian came down like the wolf on  
   the fold,  
 And his cohorts were gleaming in purple  
   and gold;  
 And the sheen of their spears was like  
   stars on the sea,  
 When the blue wave rolls nightly on  
   deep Galilee.

Like the leaves of the forest when Sum-  
   mer is green,  
 That host with their banners at sunset  
   were seen:  
 Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn  
   hath blown,  
 That host on the morrow lay wither'd and  
   strown.

For the Angel of Death spread his wings  
   on the blast,  
 And breathed in the face of the foe as he  
   pass'd;  
 And the eyes of the sleepers wax'd deadly  
   and chill,  
 And their hearts but once heaved, and for  
   ever grew still!

And there lay the steed with his nostril  
all wide,  
But through it there roll'd not the breath  
of his pride;  
And the foam of his gasping lay white  
on the turf,  
And cold as the spray of the rock-beating  
surf.

And there lay the rider distorted and  
pale,  
With the dew on his brow, and the rust  
on his mail:  
And the tents were all silent, the banners  
alone,  
The lances unlifted, the trumpet unblown.

And the widows of Ashur are loud in  
their wail,  
And the idols are broke in the temple of  
Baal;  
And the might of the Gentile, unsmeared  
by the sword,  
Hath melted like snow in the glance of  
the Lord!

*February 17, 1815. 1815.*

#### SONG OF SAUL BEFORE HIS LAST BATTLE

WARRIORS and chiefs! should the shaft  
or the sword  
Pierce me in leading the host of the  
Lord,  
Heed not the corse, though a king's, in  
your path:  
Bury your steel in the bosoms of Gath!

Thou who art bearing my buckler and  
bow,  
Should the soldiers of Saul look away from  
the foe,  
Stretch me that moment in blood at thy  
feet!  
Mine be the doom which they dared not  
to meet.

Farewell to others, but never we part,  
Heir to my royalty, son of my heart!  
Bright is the diadem, boundless the  
sway,  
Or kingly the death, which awaits us to-  
day!

*1815. 1815.*

#### STANZAS FOR MUSIC

"O Lachrymarum fons, tenero sacros  
Ducentium ortus ex animo: quater  
Felix! in imo qui scatentem  
Pectore te, pia Nympha, sensit."  
GRAY'S *Poemata*.

THERE's not a joy the world can give like  
that it takes away,  
When the glow of early thought declines  
in feeling's dull decay;  
'Tis not on youth's smooth cheek the  
blush alone, which fades so fast,  
But the tender bloom of heart is gone, ere  
youth itself be past.

Then the few whose spirits float above the  
wreck of happiness  
Are driven o'er the shoals of guilt or ocean  
of excess:  
The magnet of their course is gone, or only  
points in vain  
The shore to which their shiver'd sail  
shall never stretch again.

Then the mortal coldness of the soul like  
death itself comes down;  
It cannot feel for others' woes, it dare not  
dream its own;  
That heavy chill has frozen o'er the foun-  
tain of our tears,  
And though the eye may sparkle still, 'tis  
where the ice appears.

Though wit may flash from fluent lips,  
and mirth distract the breast,  
Through midnight hours that yield no  
more their former hope of rest;  
'Tis but as ivy-leaves around the ruin'd  
turret wreath,  
All green and wildly fresh without, but  
worn and gray beneath.

Oh could I feel as I have felt, — or be  
what I have been,  
Or weep as I could once have wept o'er  
many a vanish'd scene;  
As springs in deserts found seem sweet,  
all brackish though they be,  
So, midst the wither'd waste of life, those  
tears would flow to me.

*March, 1815. 1816.*

## FARE THEE WELL

"Alas! they had been friends in youth;  
But whispering tongues can poison truth  
And constancy lives in realms above;  
And life is thorny; and youth is vain;  
And to be wroth with one we love,  
Doth work like madness in the brain;

But never either found another  
To free the hollow heart from paining —  
They stood aloof, the scars remaining,  
Like cliffs which had been rent asunder;  
A dreary sea now flows between,  
But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder,  
Shall wholly do away, I ween,  
The marks of that which once hath been."  
COLERIDGE'S *Christabel*.

FARE thee well! and if for ever,  
Still for ever, fare thee well:  
Even though unforgiving, never  
'Gainst thee shall my heart rebel.

Would that breast were bared before thee  
Where thy head so oft hath lain,  
While that placid sleep came o'er thee  
Which thou ne'er canst know again:

Would that breast, by thee glanced over,  
Every inmost thought could show!  
Then thou wouldst at last discover  
'Twas not well to spurn it so.

Though the world for this commend  
thee —  
Though it smile upon the blow,  
Even its praises must offend thee,  
Founded on another's woe:

Though my many faults defaced me,  
Could no other arm be found,  
Than the one which once embraced me,  
To inflict a cureless wound?

Yet, oh yet, thyself deceive not;  
Love may sink by slow decay,  
But by sudden wrench, believe not  
Hearts can thus be torn away:

Still thine own life retaineth,  
Still must mine, though bleeding, beat;  
And the undying thought which paineth  
Is — that we no more may meet.

These are words of deeper sorrow  
Than the wail above the dead;  
Both shall live, but every morrow  
Wake us from a widow'd bed.

And when thou wouldst solace gather,  
When our child's first accents flow,  
Wilt thou teach her to say "Father!"  
Though his care she must forego?

When her little hands shall press thee,  
When her lip to thine is press'd,  
Think of him whose prayer shall bless thee  
Think of him thy love had bless'd!

Should her lineaments resemble  
Those thou never more may'st see,  
Then thy heart will softly tremble  
With a pulse yet true to me.

All my faults perchance thou knowest,  
All my madness none can know;  
All my hopes, wher'er thou goest,  
Wither, yet with *thee* they go.

Every feeling hath been shaken;  
Pride, which not a world could bow,  
Bows to thee — by thee forsaken,  
Even my soul forsakes me now:

But 'tis done — all words are idle —  
Words from me are vainer still;  
But the thoughts we cannot bridle  
Force their way without the will.

Fare thee well! thus disunited,  
Torn from every nearer tie,  
Sear'd in heart, and lone, and blighted,  
More than this I scarce can die.  
*March 18, 1816. April 4, 1816.*

## STANZAS FOR MUSIC

THERE be none of Beauty's daughters  
With a magic like thee;  
And like music on the waters  
Is thy sweet voice to me:  
When, as if its sound were causing  
The charmed ocean's pausing,  
The waves lie still and gleaming,  
And the lull'd winds seem dreaming;

And the midnight moon is weaving  
Her bright chain o'er the deep;  
Whose breast is gently heaving,  
As an infant's asleep:  
So the spirit bows before thee,  
To listen and adore thee;  
With a full but soft emotion,  
Like the swell of Summer's ocean.

*March 28, 1816. 1816.*

# CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIM- MAGE

## CANTO III

"Afin que cette application vous forcât de penser à autre chose; il n'y a en vérité de remède que celui-là et le temps." *Lettres du Roi de Prusse et de D'Alembert.* [Lettre cxlvi. Sept. 7, 1776.]

Is thy face like thy mother's, my fair child!

ADA! sole daughter of my house and heart?

When last I saw thy young blue eyes they smiled,

And then we parted, — not as now we part,

But with a hope. —

Awaking with a start,  
The waters heave around me; and on high  
The winds lift up their voices: I depart,  
Whither I know not; but the hour's gone by,

When Albion's lessening shores could grieve or glad mine eye.

Once more upon the waters! yet once more!

And the waves bound beneath me as a steed

That knows his rider. Welcome to their roar!

Swift be their guidance, wheresoe'er it lead!

Though the strain'd mast should quiver as a reed,

And the rent canvas fluttering strew the gale,

Still must I on; for I am as a weed,  
Flung from the rock, on Ocean's foam to sail

Where'er the surge may sweep, the tempest's breath prevail.

In my youth's summer I did sing of One,  
The wandering outlaw of his own dark mind;

Again I seize the theme, then but begun,  
And bear it with me, as the rushing wind  
Bears the cloud onwards: in that Tale I find

The furrows of long thought, and dried-up tears,

Which, ebbing, leave a sterile track behind,

O'er which all heavily the journeying years

Plod the last sands of life, — where not a flower appears.

Since my young days of passion — joy, or pain,

Perchance my heart and harp have lost a string,

And both may jar: it may be, that in vain I would essay as I have sung to sing.

Yet, though a dreary strain, to this I cling;  
So that it wean me from the weary dream  
Of selfish grief or gladness — so it fling  
Forgetfulness around me — it shall seem  
To me, though to none else, a not ungrateful theme.

He, who grown aged in this world of woe,  
In deeds, not years, piercing the depths of life,

So that no wonder waits him; nor below  
Can love or sorrow, fame, ambition, strife,

Cut to his heart again with the keen knife

Of silent, sharp endurance: he can tell  
Why thought seeks refuge in lone caves, yet rife

With airy images, and shapes which dwell  
Still unimpair'd, though old, in the soul's haunted cell.

'Tis to create, and in creating live  
A being more intense that we endow  
With form our fancy, gaining as we give  
The life we image, even as I do now.

What am I? Nothing: but not so art thou,

Soul of my thought! with whom I traverse earth,

Invisible but gazing, as I glow  
Mix'd with thy spirit, blended with thy birth,

And feeling still with thee in my crush'd feelings' dearth.

Yet must I think less wildly; — I have thought

Too long and darkly, till my brain became,

In its own eddy boiling and o'erwrought,  
A whirling gulf of phantasy and flame:  
And thus, untought in youth my heart to tame,

My springs of life were poison'd. 'Tis too late!

Yet am I changed; though still enough the same

In strength to bear what time cannot  
abate,  
And feed on bitter fruits without accus-  
ing Fate.

Something too much of this:— but now  
'tis past,

And the spell closes with its silent seal.  
Long absent HAROLD re-appears at last;  
He of the breast which fain no more would  
feel,

Wrung with the wounds which kill not  
but ne'er heal;

Yet Time, who changes all, had alter'd  
him

In soul and aspect as in age: years steal  
Fire from the mind as vigor from the  
limb;

And life's enchanted cup but sparkles  
near the brim.

His had been quaff'd too quickly, and he  
found

The dregs were wormwood, — but he  
fill'd again,

And from a purer fount, on holier ground,  
And deem'd its spring perpetual; but in  
vain!

Still round him clung invisibly a chain  
Which gall'd for ever, fettering though  
unseen,

And heavy though it clank'd not; worn  
with pain,

Which pined although it spoke not, and  
grew keen,

Entering with every step he took through  
many a scene.

Secure in guarded coldness, he had mix'd  
Again in fancied safety with his kind,  
And deem'd his spirit now so firmly fix'd  
And sheath'd with an invulnerable mind,  
That, if no joy, no sorrow lurk'd behind;  
And he, as one, might midst the many  
stand

Unheeded, searching through the crowd  
to find

Fit speculation; such as in strange land  
He found in wonder-works of God and  
Nature's hand.

But who can view the ripen'd rose, nor  
seek

To wear it? who can curiously behold  
The smoothness and the sheen of beauty's  
cheek,

Nor feel the heart can never all grow old?  
Who can contemplate Fame through  
clouds unfold

The star which rises o'er her steep, nor  
climb?

Harold, once more within the vortex,  
roll'd

On with the giddy circle, chasing Time,  
Yet with a nobler aim than in his youth's  
fond prime.

But soon he knew himself the most unfit  
Of men to herd with Man; with whom he  
held

Little in common; untaught to submit  
His thoughts to others, though his soul  
was quell'd

In youth by his own thoughts; still un-  
compell'd,

He would not yield dominion of his mind  
To spirits against whom his own rebell'd;  
Proud though in desolation; which could  
find

A life within itself, to breathe without  
mankind.

Where rose the mountains, there to him  
were friends;

Where roll'd the ocean, thereon was his  
home;

Where a blue sky, and glowing clime,  
extends,

He had the passion and the power to  
roam;

The desert, forest, cavern, breaker's foam,  
Were unto him companionship; they  
spake

A mutual language, clearer than the  
tone

Of his land's tongue, which he would oft  
forsake

For Nature's pages glass'd by sunbeams  
on the lake.

Like the Chaldean, he could watch the  
stars,

Till he had peopled them with beings  
bright

As their own beams; and earth, and  
earth-born jars,

And human frailties, were forgotten  
quite:

Could he have kept his spirit to that flight  
He had been happy; but this clay will  
sink

Its spark immortal, envying it the light



To which it mounts, as if to break the  
link  
That keeps us from yon heaven which  
woos us to its brink.

But in Man's dwellings he became a  
thing  
Restless and worn, and stern and weari-  
some,  
Droop'd as a wild-born falcon with clipt  
wing,  
To whom the boundless air alone were  
home:  
Then came his fit again, which to o'er-  
come,  
As eagerly the barr'd-up bird will beat  
His breast and beak against his wiry  
dome  
Till the blood tinge his plumage, so the  
heat  
Of his impeded soul would through his  
bosom eat.

Self-exiled Harold wanders forth again,  
With nought of hope left, but with less  
of gloom;  
The very knowledge that he lived in  
vain,  
That all was over on this side the tomb,  
Had made Despair a smilingness assume,  
Which, though 'twere wild, — as on the  
plunder'd wreck  
When mariners would madly meet their  
doom  
With draughts intemperate on the sink-  
ing deck, —  
Did yet inspire a cheer, which he forbore  
to check.

Stop! — for thy tread is on an Empire's  
dust!  
An Earthquake's spoil is sepulchred  
below!  
Is the spot mark'd with no colossal  
bust?  
Nor column trophied for triumphal show?  
None; but the moral's truth tells simpler  
so,  
As the ground was before, thus let it  
be; —  
How that red rain hath made the harvest  
grow!  
And is this all the world has gain'd by  
thee,  
Thou first and last of fields! king-making  
Victory?

And Harold stands upon this place of  
skulls,  
The grave of France, the deadly Water-  
loo!  
How in an hour the power which gave  
annuls  
Its gifts, transferring fame as fleeting  
too;  
In "pride of place" here last the eagle  
flew,  
Then tore with bloody talon the rent  
plain,  
Pierced by the shaft of banded nations  
through;  
Ambition's life and labors all were vain;  
He wears the shatter'd links of the world's  
broken chain.

Fit retribution! Gaul may champ the bit  
And foam in fetters; — but is Earth more  
free?  
Did nations combat to make *One* submit;  
Or league to teach all kings true sov-  
ereignty?  
What! shall reviving Thraldom again be  
The patch'd-up idol of enlighten'd days?  
Shall we, who struck the Lion down, shall  
we  
Pay the Wolf homage? proffering lowly  
gaze  
And servile knees to thrones? No;  
*prove* before ye praise!

If not, o'er one fallen despot boast no  
more!  
In vain fair cheeks were furrow'd with  
hot tears  
For Europe's flowers long rooted up  
before  
The trampler of her vineyards; in vain  
years  
Of death, depopulation, bondage, fears,  
Have all been borne, and broken by the  
accord  
Of roused-up millions; all that most  
endears  
Glory, is when the myrtle wreathes a  
sword  
Such as Harmodius drew on Athens'  
tyrant lord.

There was a sound of revelry by night  
And Belgium's capital had gather'd then  
Her Beauty and her Chivalry, and bright  
The lamps shone o'er fair women and  
brave men;

A thousand hearts beat happily; and  
 when  
 Music arose with its voluptuous swell,  
 Soft eyes look'd love to eyes which spake  
 again,  
 And all went merry as a marriage bell;  
 But hush! hark! a deep sound strikes  
 like a rising knell!

Did ye not hear it? — No; 'twas but the  
 wind,  
 Or the car rattling o'er the stony street;  
 On with the dance! let joy be uncon-  
 fined;  
 No sleep till morn, when Youth and  
 Pleasure meet  
 To chase the glowing Hours with flying  
 feet —  
 But hark! — that heavy sound breaks  
 in once more,  
 As if the clouds its echo would repeat;  
 And nearer, clearer, deadlier than before!  
 Arm! Arm! it is — it is — the cannon's  
 opening roar!

Within a window'd niche of that high hall  
 Sate Brunswick's fated chieftain; he  
 did hear  
 That sound the first amidst the festival,  
 And caught its tone with Death's pro-  
 phetic ear;  
 And when they smiled because he deem'd  
 it near,  
 His heart more truly knew that peal too  
 well  
 Which stretch'd his father on a bloody  
 bier.  
 And roused the vengeance blood alone  
 could quell;  
 He rush'd into the field, and, foremost  
 fighting, fell.

Ah! then and there was hurrying to and  
 fro,  
 And gathering tears, and tremblings of  
 distress,  
 And cheeks all pale, which but an hour  
 ago  
 Blush'd at the praise of their own love-  
 liness;  
 And there were sudden partings, such as  
 press  
 The life from our young hearts, and chok-  
 ing sighs  
 Which ne'er might be repeated; who  
 could guess

If ever more should meet those mutual  
 eyes,  
 Since upon night so sweet such awful  
 morn could rise!

And there was mounting in hot haste:  
 the steed,  
 The mustering squadron, and the clat-  
 tering car,  
 Went pouring forward with impetuous  
 speed,  
 And swiftly forming in the ranks of war;  
 And the deep thunder peal on peal afar;  
 And near, the beat of the alarming drum  
 Roused up the soldier ere the morning star;  
 While throng'd the citizens with terror  
 dumb,  
 Or whispering, with white lips — "The  
 foe, they come! they come!"

And wild and high the "Cameron's  
 gathering" rose!  
 The war-note of Lochiel, which Albyn's  
 hills  
 Have heard, and heard, too, have her  
 Saxon foes: —  
 How in the noon of night that pibroch  
 thrills,  
 Savage and shrill! But with the breath  
 which fills  
 Their mountain-pipe, so fill the mountain-  
 eers  
 With the fierce native daring which  
 instils  
 The stirring memory of a thousand years,  
 And Evan's, Donald's fame rings in each  
 clansman's ears:

And Ardennes waves above them her  
 green leaves,  
 Dewy with nature's tear-drops as they  
 pass,  
 Grieving, if aught inanimate e'er grieves,  
 Over the unreturning brave, — alas!  
 Ere evening to be trodden like the grass  
 Which now beneath them, but above shall  
 grow  
 In its next verdure, when this fiery mass  
 Of living valor, rolling on the foe  
 And burning with high hope shall moulder  
 cold and low.

Last noon beheld them full of lusty life,  
 Last eve in Beauty's circle proudly gay,  
 The midnight brought the signal-sound  
 of strife.

The morn the marshalling in arms, —  
the day

Battle's magnificently stern array!

The thunder-clouds close o'er it, which  
when rent

The earth is cover'd thick with other clay,  
Which her own clay shall cover, heap'd  
and pent,

Rider and horse, — friend, foe, — in one  
red burial blent!

Their praise is hymn'd by loftier harps  
than mine:

Yet one I would select from that proud  
throng,

Partly because they blend me with his  
line.

And partly that I did his sire some wrong,  
And partly that bright names will hallow  
song;

And his was of the bravest, and when  
shower'd

The death-bolts deadliest the thinn'd  
files along.

Even where the thickest of war's tempest  
lower'd,

They reach'd no nobler breast than thine,  
young gallant Howard!

There have been tears and breaking  
hearts for thee,

And mine were nothing had I such to  
give;

But when I stood beneath the fresh green  
tree,

Which living waves where thou didst  
cease to live,

And saw around me the wide field revive  
With fruits and fertile promise, and the  
Spring

Come forth her work of gladness to con-  
trive,

With all her reckless birds upon the wing,  
I turn'd from all she brought to those she  
could not bring.

I turn'd to thee, to thousands, of whom  
each

And one as all a ghastly gap did make  
In his own kind and kindred, whom to  
teach

Forgetfulness were mercy for their sake;  
The Archangel's trump, not Glory's, must  
awake

Those whom they thirst for; though the  
sound of Fame

May for a moment soothe, it cannot slake  
The fever of vain longing, and the name  
So honor'd but assumes a stronger,  
bitterer claim.

They mourn, but smile at length; and,  
smiling, mourn:

The tree will wither long before it fall;  
The hull drives on, though mast and sail  
be torn;

The roof-tree sinks, but moulders on the  
hall

In massy hoariness; the ruin'd wall  
Stands when its wind-worn battlements  
are gone;

The bars survive the captive they enthrall;  
The day drags through, though storms  
keep out the sun:

And thus the heart will break, yet bro-  
kenly live on:

Even as a broken mirror, which the glass  
In every fragment multiplies; and makes  
A thousand images of one that was,

The same, and still the more, the more it  
breaks;

And thus the heart will do which not  
forsakes,

Living in shatter'd guise; and still, and  
cold,

And bloodless, with its sleepless sorrow  
aches,

Yet withers on till all without is old,  
Showing no visible sign, for such things  
are untold.

There is a very life in our despair,  
Vitality of poison, — a quick root  
Which feeds these deadly branches; for  
it were

As nothing did we die; but Life will suit  
Itself to Sorrow's most detested fruit,  
Like to the apples on the Dead Sea's  
shore,

All ashes to the taste: Did man compute  
Existence by enjoyment, and count o'er  
Such hours 'gainst years of life, — say,  
would he name threescore?

The Psalmist number'd out the years of  
man:

They are enough; and if thy tale be  
*true*,

Thou, who didst grudge him even that  
fleeting span,

More than enough, thou fatal Waterloo!

Millions of tongues record thee, and anew  
 Their children's lips shall echo them, and  
     say —  
 "Here, where the sword united nations  
     drew,  
 Our countrymen were warring on that  
     day!"  
 And this is much, and all which will not  
     pass away.

There sunk the greatest, nor the worst of  
     men,  
 Whose spirit, antithetically mixt,  
 One moment of the mightiest, and again  
 On little objects with like firmness fixt;  
 Extreme in all things! hadst thou been  
     betwixt,  
 Thy throne had still been thine, or never  
     been;  
 For daring made thy rise as fall: thou  
     seek'st  
 Even now to re-assume the imperial mien,  
 And shake again the world, the Thunderer  
     of the scene!

Conqueror and captive of the earth art  
     thou!  
 She trembles at thee still, and thy wild  
     name  
 Was ne'er more bruited in men's minds  
     than now  
 That thou art nothing, save the jest of  
     Fame,  
 Who woo'd thee once, thy vassal, and  
     became  
 The flatterer of thy fierceness, till thou wert  
 A god unto thyself; nor less the same  
 To the astounded kingdoms all inert,  
 Who deem'd thee for a time whate'er thou  
     didst assert.

Oh, more or less than man—in high or low,  
 Battling with nations, flying from the  
     field;  
 Now making monarchs' necks thy foot-  
     stool, now  
 More than thy meanest soldier taught to  
     yield;  
 An empire thou couldst crush, command,  
     rebuild,  
 But govern not thy pettiest passion, nor,  
 However deeply in men's spirits skill'd,  
 Look through thine own, nor curb the lust  
     of war,  
 Nor learn that tempted Fate will leave the  
     loftiest star.

Yet well thy soul hath brook'd the turn-  
     ing tide  
 With that untaught innate philosophy,  
 Which, be it wisdom, coldness, or deep  
     pride,  
 Is gall and wormwood to an enemy.  
 When the whole host of hatred stood hard  
     by,  
 To watch and mock thee shrinking, thou  
     hast smiled  
 With a sedate and all-enduring eye; —  
 When Fortune fled her spoil'd and favor-  
     ite child,  
 He stood unbow'd beneath the ills upon  
     him piled.

Sager than in thy fortunes; for in them  
 Ambition steel'd thee on too far to show  
 That just habitual scorn, which could  
     contemn  
 Men and their thoughts; 'twas wise to  
     feel, not so  
 To wear it ever on thy lip and brow,  
 And spurn the instruments thou wert to  
     use  
 Till they were turn'd unto thine over-  
     throw:  
 'Tis but a worthless world to win or lose;  
 So hath it proved to thee, and all such  
     lot who choose.

If, like a tower upon a headland rock,  
 Thou hadst been made to stand or fall  
     alone,  
 Such scorn of man had help'd to brave  
     the shock;  
 But men's thoughts were the steps which  
     paved thy throne,  
 Their admiration thy best weapon shone;  
 The part of Philip's son was thine, not  
     then  
 (Unless aside thy purple had been thrown)  
 Like stern Diogenes to mock at men;  
 For sceptred cynics earth were far too  
     wide a den.

But quiet to quick bosoms is a hell,  
 And *there* hath been thy bane; there is a  
     fire  
 And motion of the soul which will not  
     dwell  
 In its own narrow being, but aspire  
 Beyond the fitting medium of desire;  
 And, but once kindled, quenchless ever-  
     more,  
 Preys upon high adventure, nor can tire

Of aught but rest; a fever at the core,  
Fatal to him who bears, to all who ever  
bore.

This makes the madmen who have made  
men mad  
By their contagion; Conquerors and  
Kings,  
Founders of sects and systems, to whom  
add  
Sophists, Bards, Statesmen, all unquiet  
things  
Which stir too strongly the soul's secret  
springs,  
And are themselves the fools to those they  
fool;  
Envi'd, yet how unenviable! what stings  
Are theirs! One breast laid open were a  
school  
Which would unteach mankind the lust  
to shine or rule:

Their breath is agitation, and their life  
A storm whereon they ride, to sink at last,  
And yet so nursed and bigoted to strife,  
That should their days, surviving perils  
past,  
Melt to calm twilight, they feel overcast  
With sorrow and supineness, and so die;  
Even as a flame unfed, which runs to  
waste  
With its own flickering, or a sword laid  
by,  
Which eats into itself, and rusts inglori-  
ously.

He who ascends to mountain-tops, shall  
find  
The loftiest peaks most wrapt in clouds  
and snow;  
He who surpasses or subdues mankind  
Must look down on the hate of those  
below.  
Though high *above* the sun of glory glow,  
And far *beneath* the earth and ocean  
spread,  
*Round* him are icy rocks, and loudly blow  
Contending tempests on his naked head,  
And thus reward the toils which to those  
summits led.

Away with these! true Wisdom's world  
will be  
Within its own creation, or in thine,  
Maternal Nature! for who teems like  
thee.

Thus on the banks of thy majestic Rhine?  
There Harold gazes on a work divine,  
A blending of all beauties; streams and  
dells,  
Fruit, foliage, crag, wood, cornfield,  
mountain, vine,  
And chiefless castles breathing stern  
farewells  
From gray but leafy walls, where Ruin  
greenly dwells.

And there they stand, as stands a lofty  
mind,  
Worn, but unstooping to the baser crowd,  
All tenantless, save to the crannying  
wind,  
Or holding dark communion with the  
cloud.  
There was a day when they were young  
and proud;  
Banners on high, and battles pass'd  
below;  
But they who fought are in a bloody  
shroud,  
And those which waved are shredless dust  
ere now,  
And the bleak battlements shall bear no  
future blow.

Beneath those battlements, within those  
walls,  
Power dwelt amidst her passions; in  
proud state  
Each robber chief upheld his armed  
halls,  
Doing his evil will, nor less elate  
Than mightier heroes of a longer date.  
What want these outlaws conquerors  
should have  
But history's purchased page to call them  
great?  
A wider space, an ornamented grave?  
Their hopes were not less warm, their  
souls were full as brave.

In their baronial feuds and single fields,  
What deeds of prowess unrecorded died!  
And Love, which lent a blazon to their  
shields,  
With emblems well devised by amorous  
pride,  
Through all the mail of iron hearts would  
glide;  
But still their flame was fierceness, and  
drew on  
Keen contest and destruction near allied,



And many a tower for some fair mischief  
won,  
Saw the discolored Rhine beneath its  
ruin run.

But Thou, exulting and abounding river!  
Making thy waves a blessing as they flow  
Through banks whose beauty would  
endure for ever

Could man but leave thy bright creation so,  
Nor its fair promise from the surface mow  
With the sharp scythe of conflict, — then  
to see

Thy valley of sweet waters, were to know  
Earth paved like Heaven; and to seem  
such to me,

Even now what wants thy stream? —  
that it should Lethe be.

A thousand battles have assail'd thy  
banks,

But these and half their fame have pass'd  
away,

And Slaughtering heap'd on high his welter-  
ing ranks;

Their very graves are gone, and what are  
they?

Thy tide wash'd down the blood of yester-  
day,

And all was stainless, and on thy clear  
stream

Glass'd, with its dancing light, the sunny  
ray;

But o'er the blacken'd memory's blight-  
ing dream

Thy waves would vainly roll, all sweeping  
as they seem.

Thus Harold inly said, and pass'd along,  
Yet not insensible to all which here  
Awoke the jocund birds to early song  
In glens which might have made even  
exile dear:

Though on his brow were graven lines  
austere,

And tranquil sternness, which had ta'en  
the place

Of feelings fierier far but less severe,  
Joy was not always absent from his face,  
But o'er it in such scenes would steal with  
transient trace.

Nor was all love shut from him, though  
his days

Of passion had consumed themselves to  
dust.

It is in vain that we would coldly gaze  
On such as smile upon us; the heart must  
Leap kindly back to kindness, though  
disgust

Hath wean'd it from all worldlings  
thus he felt,

For there was soft remembrance, and  
sweet trust

In one fond breast, to which his own  
would melt,

And in its tenderer hour on that his bosom  
dwelt.

And he had learn'd to love, — I know not  
why,

For this in such as him seems strange of  
mood, —

The helpless looks of blooming infancy,  
Even in its earliest nurture; what sub-  
dued,

To change like this, a mind so far imbued  
With scorn of man, it little boots to know;  
But thus it was; and though in solitude  
Small power the nipp'd affections have to  
grow,

In him this glow'd when all beside had  
ceased to glow.

And there was one soft breast, as hath  
been said,

Which unto his was bound by stronger  
ties

Than the church links withal; and,  
though unwed,

That love was pure, and, far above dis-  
guise,

Had stood the test of mortal enmities  
Still undivided, and cemented more

By peril, dreaded most in female eyes;  
But this was firm, and from a foreign  
shore

Well to that heart might his these absent  
greetings pour!

## I

The castled crag of Drachenfels  
Frowns o'er the wide and winding Rhine.  
Whose breast of waters broadly swells  
Between the banks which bear the vine,  
And hills all rich with blossom'd trees,  
And fields which promise corn and wine,  
And scatter'd cities crowning these,  
Whose far white walls along them shine,  
Have strew'd a scene, which I should see  
With double joy wert *there* with me.

## 2

And peasant girls, with deep blue eyes,  
 And hands which offer early flowers,  
 Walk smiling o'er this paradise;  
 Above, the frequent feudal towers  
 Through green leaves lift their walls of  
 gray;  
 And many a rock which steeply lowers,  
 And noble arch in proud decay,  
 Look o'er this vale of vintage-bowers;  
 But one thing want these banks of  
 Rhine, —  
 Thy gentle hand to clasp in mine!

## 3

I send the lilies given to me;  
 Though long before thy hand they touch,  
 I know that they must wither'd be,  
 But yet reject them not as such;  
 For I have cherish'd them as dear,  
 Because they yet may meet thine eye,  
 And guide thy soul to mine even here,  
 When thou behold'st them drooping nigh,  
 And know'st them gather'd by the Rhine,  
 And offer'd from my heart to thine!

## 4

The river nobly foams and flows —  
 The charm of this enchanted ground,  
 And all its thousand turns disclose  
 Some fresher beauty varying round:  
 The haughtiest breast its wish might  
 bound  
 Through life to dwell delighted here;  
 Nor could on earth a spot be found  
 To nature and to me so dear,  
 Could thy dear eyes in following mine  
 Still sweeten more these banks of Rhine!

By Coblenz, on a rise of gentle ground,  
 There is a small and simple pyramid,  
 Crowning the summit of the verdant  
 mound:  
 Beneath its base are heroes' ashes hid,  
 Our enemy's — but let not that forbid  
 Honor to Marceau! o'er whose early tomb  
 Tears, big tears, gush'd from the rough  
 soldier's lid,  
 Lamenting and yet envying such a doom,  
 Falling for France, whose rights he battled  
 to resume.

Brief, brave, and glorious was his young  
 career, —  
 His mourners were two hosts, his friends  
 and foes;

And fitly may the stranger lingering here  
 Pray for his gallant spirit's bright repose;  
 For he was Freedom's champion, one of  
 those,  
 The few in number, who had not o'erstept  
 The charter to chastise which she bestows  
 On such as wield her weapons; he had  
 kept  
 The whiteness of his soul, and thus men  
 o'er him wept.

Here Ehrenbreitstein, with her shatter'd  
 wall  
 Black with the miner's blast, upon her  
 height  
 Yet shows of what she was, when shell and  
 ball  
 Rebounding idly on her strength did  
 light:  
 A tower of victory! from whence the  
 flight  
 Of baffled foes was watch'd along the  
 plain:  
 But Peace destroy'd what War could  
 never blight,  
 And laid those proud roofs bare to Sum-  
 mer's rain —  
 On which the iron shower for years had  
 pour'd in vain.

Adieu to thee, fair Rhine! How long  
 delighted  
 The stranger fain would linger on his way!  
 Thine is a scene alike where souls united  
 Or lonely Contemplation thus might  
 stray;  
 And could the ceaseless vultures cease  
 to prey  
 On self-condemning bosoms, it were here,  
 Where Nature, nor too sombre nor too  
 gay,  
 Wild but not rude, awful yet not austere,  
 Is to the mellow Earth as Autumn to the  
 year.

Adieu to thee again! a vain adieu!  
 There can be no farewell to scene like  
 thine;  
 The mind is color'd by thy every hue;  
 And if reluctantly the eyes resign  
 Their cherish'd gaze upon thee, lovely  
 Rhine!  
 'Tis with the thankful heart of parting  
 praise;  
 More mighty spots may rise, more glaring  
 shine,

But none unite in one attaching maze  
The brilliant, fair, and soft, — the glories  
of old days,

The negligently grand, the fruitful bloom  
Of coming ripeness, the white city's sheen,  
The rolling stream, the precipice's gloom,  
The forest's growth, and Gothic walls  
between,  
The wild rocks shaped as they had turrets  
been,

In mockery of man's art; and these withal  
A race of faces happy as the scene,  
Whose fertile bounties here extend to all,  
Still springing o'er thy banks, though  
Empires near them fall.

But these recede. Above me are the  
Alps,  
The palaces of Nature, whose vast walls  
Have pinnacle'd in clouds their snowy  
scalps,  
And throned Eternity in icy halls  
Of cold sublimity, where forms and falls  
The avalanche — the thunderbolt of  
snow!

All that expands the spirit, yet appals,  
Gather around these summits, as to show  
How Earth may pierce to Heaven, yet  
leave vain man below.

But ere these matchless heights I dare to  
scan,

There is a spot should not be pass'd in  
vain, —

Morat! the proud, the patriot field!  
where man

May gaze on ghastly trophies of the slain,  
Nor blush for those who conquer'd on that  
plain;

Here Burgundy bequeath'd his tombless  
host,

A bony heap, through ages to remain,  
Themselves their monument; — the Sty-  
gian coast

Unsepulchred they roam'd, and shriek'd  
each wandering ghost.

While Waterloo with Cannæ's carnage vies,  
Morat and Marathon twin names shall  
stand;

They were true Glory's stainless victories,  
Won by the unambitious heart and hand  
Of a proud, brotherly, and civic band,  
All unbought champions in no princely  
cause

Of vice-entail'd Corruption; they no  
land

Doom'd to bewail the blasphemy of  
laws

Making kings' rights divine, by some  
Draconic clause.

By a lone wall a lonelier column rears  
A gray and grief-worn aspect of old  
days;

'Tis the last remnant of the wreck of  
years,

And looks as with the wild-bewilder'd  
gaze

Of one to stone converted by amaze,  
Yet still with consciousness; and there it  
stands

Making a marvel that it not decays,  
When the coeval pride of human hands,  
Levell'd Adventicum,<sup>1</sup> hath strew'd her  
subject lands.

And there — oh! sweet and sacred be  
the name! —

Julia — the daughter, the devoted —  
gave

Her youth to Heaven; her heart, beneath  
a claim

Nearest to Heaven's, broke o'er a father's  
grave.

Justice is sworn 'gainst tears, and hers  
would crave

The life she lived in; but the judge was  
just,

And then she died on him she could not  
save.

Their tomb was simple, and without a  
bust,

And held within their urn one mind, one  
heart, one dust.

But these are deeds which should not pass  
away,

And names that must not wither, though  
the earth

Forgets her empires with a just decay,  
The enslavers and the enslaved, their  
death and birth;

The high, the mountain-majesty of worth  
Should be, and shall, survivor of its woe,  
And from its immortality look forth

In the sun's face, like yonder Alpine snow,  
Imperishably pure beyond all things  
below.

<sup>1</sup> The Roman capital of Helvetia; now Avenches.

Lake Leman woos me with its crystal face,  
The mirror where the stars and mountains  
view

The stillness of their aspect in each trace  
Its clear depth yields of their far height  
and hue;

There is too much of man here, to look  
through

With a fit mind the might which I behold;  
But soon in me shall Loneliness renew  
Thoughts hid, but not less cherish'd than  
of old,

Ere mingling with the herd had penn'd  
me in their fold.

To fly from, need not be to hate, man-  
kind:

All are not fit with them to stir and toil,  
Nor is it discontent to keep the mind  
Deep in its fountain, lest it overboil  
In the hot throng, where we become the  
spoil

Of our infection, till too late and long  
We may deplore and struggle with the  
coil,

In wretched interchange of wrong for  
wrong

Midst a contentious world, striving where  
none are strong.

There, in a moment we may plunge our  
years

In fatal penitence, and in the blight  
Of our own soul turn all our blood to  
tears,

And color things to come with hues of  
Night;

The race of life becomes a hopeless flight  
To those who walk in darkness: on the sea  
The boldest steer but where their ports  
invite;

But there are wanderers o'er Eternity  
Whose bark drives on and on, and  
anchor'd ne'er shall be.

Is it not better, then, to be alone,  
And love Earth only for its earthly sake?  
By the blue rushing of the arrowy Rhone,  
Or the pure bosom of its nursing lake,  
Which feeds it as a mother who doth  
make

A fair but froward infant her own care,  
Kissing its cries away as these awake;—  
Is it not better thus our lives to wear,  
Than join the crushing crowd, doom'd  
to inflict or bear?

I live not in myself, but I become  
Portion of that around me; and to me  
High mountains are a feeling, but the  
hum

Of human cities torture: I can see  
Nothing to loathe in nature, save to be  
A link reluctant in a fleshly chain,  
Class'd among creatures, when the soul  
can flee,

And with the sky, the peak, the heaving  
plain

Of ocean, or the stars, mingle, and not in  
vain.

And thus I am absorb'd, and this is life:  
I look upon the peopled desert past,  
As on a place of agony and strife,

Where, for some sin, to sorrow I was cast,  
To act and suffer, but remount at last  
With a fresh pinion; which I feel to  
spring,

Though young, yet waxing vigorous as the  
blast

Which it would cope with, on delighted  
wing,

Spurning the clay-cold bonds which round  
our being cling.

And when, at length, the mind shall be all  
free

From what it hates in this degraded form,  
Reft of its carnal life, save what shall be  
Existent happier in the fly and worm—  
When elements to elements conform,  
And dust is as it should be, shall I not  
Feel all I see, less dazzling, but more  
warm?

The bodiless thought? the Spirit of each  
spot?

Of which, even now, I share at times the  
immortal lot?

Are not the mountains, waves, and skies,  
a part

Of me and of my soul, as I of them?  
Is not the love of these deep in my heart  
With a pure passion? should I not con-  
temn

All objects, if compared with these? and  
stem

A tide of suffering, rather than forego  
Such feelings for the hard and worldly  
phlegm

Of those whose eyes are only turn'd below,  
Gazing upon the ground, with thoughts  
which dare not glow?



But this is not my theme; and I return  
To that which is immediate, and require  
Those who find contemplation in the urn,  
To look on One, whose dust was once all  
fire,

A native of the land where I respire  
The clear air for a while — a passing  
guest

Where he became a being, — whose desire  
Was to be glorious; 'twas a foolish quest,  
The which to gain and keep, he sacrificed  
all rest.

Here the self-torturing sophist, wild  
Rousseau,

The apostle of affliction, he who threw  
Enchantment over passion, and from woe  
Wrung overwhelming eloquence, first drew  
The breath which made him wretched;  
yet he knew

How to make madness beautiful and cast  
O'er erring deeds and thoughts a heav-  
enly hue

Of words, like sunbeams, dazzling as they  
past

The eyes, which o'er them shed tears feel-  
ing and fast.

His love was passion's essence: — as a tree  
On fire by lightning, with ethereal flame  
Kindled he was, and blasted; for to be  
Thus, and enamor'd, were in him the  
same.

But his was not the love of living dame,  
Nor of the dead who rise upon our dreams,  
But of ideal beauty, which became  
In him existence, and o'erflowing teems  
Along his burning page, distemper'd  
though it seems.

*This* breathed itself to life in Julie, *this*  
Invested her with all that's wild and  
sweet;

This hallow'd, too, the memorable kiss  
Which every morn his fever'd lip would  
greet,

From hers, who but with friendship his  
would meet;

But to that gentle touch through brain  
and breast

Flash'd the thrill'd spirit's love-devouring  
heat;

In that absorbing sigh perchance more  
blest

Than vulgar minds may be with all they  
seek possess.

His life was one long war with self-sought  
foes,

Or friends by him self-banish'd; for his  
mind

Had grown Suspicion's sanctuary, and  
chose,

For its own cruel sacrifice, the kind,  
'Gainst whom he raged with fury strange  
and blind.

But he was phrensied, — wherefore, who  
may know?

Since cause might be which skill could  
never find;

But he was phrensied by disease or woe,  
To that worst pitch of all, which wears a  
reasoning show.

For then he was inspired, and from him  
came,

As from the Pythian's mystic cave of yore,  
Those oracles which set the world in  
flame,

Nor ceased to burn till kingdoms were  
no more:

Did he not this for France? which lay  
before

Bow'd to the inborn tyranny of years?  
Broken and trembling to the yoke she  
bore,

Till by the voice of him and his compeers  
Roused up to too much wrath, which fol-  
lows o'ergrown fears?

They made themselves a fearful monu-  
ment!

The wreck of old opinions — things which  
grew,

Breathed from the birth of time: the veil  
they rent,

And what behind it lay, all earth shall  
view.

But good with ill they also overthrew,  
Leaving but ruins, wherewith to rebuild  
Upon the same foundation, and renew  
Dungeons and thrones, which the same  
hour reft'd,

As heretofore, because ambition was self-  
will'd.

But this will not endure, nor be endured!  
Mankind have felt their strength, and  
made it felt.

They might have used it better, but,  
allured

By their new vigor, sternly have they  
dealt



On one another; pity ceased to melt  
 With her once natural charities. But  
 they,  
 Who in oppression's darkness caved had  
 dwelt,  
 They were not eagles, nourish'd with the  
 day;  
 What marvel then, at times, if they mis-  
 took their prey?

What deep wounds ever closed without  
 a scar?  
 The heart's bleed longest, and but heal  
 to wear  
 That which disfigures it; and they who  
 war  
 With their own hopes, and have been van-  
 quish'd, bear  
 Silence, but not submission: in his lair  
 Fix'd Passion holds his breath, until the  
 hour  
 Which shall atone for years; none need  
 despair:  
 It came, it cometh, and will come, — the  
 power  
 To punish or forgive — in *one* we shall be  
 slower.

Clear, placid Leman! thy contrasted  
 lake,  
 With the wild world I dwelt in, is a thing  
 Which warns me, with its stillness, to  
 forsake  
 Earth's troubled waters for a purer spring.  
 This quiet sail is as a noiseless wing  
 To waft me from distraction; once I  
 loved  
 Torn ocean's roar, but thy soft murmur-  
 ing  
 Sounds sweet as if a Sister's voice re-  
 proved,  
 That I with stern delights should e'er  
 have been so moved.

It is the hush of night, and all between  
 Thy margin and the mountains, dusk,  
 yet clear,  
 Mellow'd and mingling, yet distinctly  
 seen,  
 Save darken'd Jura, whose capt heights  
 appear  
 Precipitously steep; and drawing near,  
 There breathes a living fragrance from  
 the shore,  
 Of flowers yet fresh with childhood; on  
 the ear

Drops the light drip of the suspended oar,  
 Or chirps the grasshopper one goodnight  
 carol more;

He is an evening reveller, who makes  
 His life an infancy, and sings his fill;  
 At intervals, some bird from out the  
 brakes  
 Starts into voice a moment, then is still.  
 There seems a floating whisper on the hill,  
 But that is fancy, for the starlight dew  
 All silently their tears of love instil,  
 Weeping themselves away, till they infuse  
 Deep into nature's breast the spirit of  
 her hues.

Ye stars! which are the poetry of heaven!  
 If in your bright leaves we would read  
 the fate  
 Of men and empires, — 'tis to be forgiven;  
 That in our aspirations to be great,  
 Our destinies o'erleap their mortal state,  
 And claim a kindred with you; for ye are  
 A beauty and a mystery, and create  
 In us such love and reverence from afar,  
 That fortune, fame, power, life, have  
 named themselves a star.

All heaven and earth are still — though  
 not in sleep,  
 But breathless, as we grow when feeling  
 most:  
 And silent, as we stand in thoughts too  
 deep: —  
 All heaven and earth are still: From the  
 high host  
 Of stars, to the lull'd lake and mountain  
 coast,  
 All is concenter'd in a life intense,  
 Where not a beam, nor air, nor leaf is lost,  
 But hath a part of being, and a sense  
 Of that which is of all Creator and de-  
 fence.

Then stirs the feeling infinite, so felt  
 In solitude, where we are *least* alone;  
 A truth, which through our being then  
 doth melt,  
 And purifies from self: it is a tone,  
 The soul and source of music, which  
 makes known  
 Eternal harmony, and sheds a charm  
 Like to the fabled Cytherea's zone,  
 Binding all things with beauty: —  
 'twould disarm  
 The spectre Death, had he substantial  
 power to harm.

Not vainly did the early Persian make  
His altar the high places, and the peak  
Of earth-o'ergazing mountains, and thus  
take

A fit and unwall'd temple, there to seek  
The Spirit, in whose honor shrines are  
weak,

Uprear'd of human hands. Come, and  
compare

Columns and idol-dwellings, Goth or  
Greek,

With Nature's realms of worship, earth  
and air,

Nor fix on fond abodes to circumscribe  
thy prayer!

The sky is changed!—and such a  
change! Oh night,

And storm, and darkness, ye are won-  
drous strong,

Yet lovely in your strength, as is the  
light

Of a dark eye in woman! Far along,  
From peak to peak, the rattling crags  
among

Leaps the live thunder! Not from one  
lone cloud,

But every mountain now hath found a  
tongue,

And Jura answers, through her misty  
shroud,

Back to the joyous Alps, who call to her  
aloud!

And this is in the night:—Most glorious  
night!

Thou wert not sent for slumber! let me  
be

A sharer in thy fierce and far delight,—  
A portion of the tempest and of thee!

How the lit lake shines, a phosphoric sea,  
And the big rain comes dancing to the  
earth!

And now again 'tis black, — and now, the  
glee

Of the loud hills shakes with its mountain-  
mirth,

As if they did rejoice o'er a young earth-  
quake's birth.

Now, where the swift Rhone cleaves his  
way between

Heights which appear as lovers who have  
parted

In hate, whose mining depths so inter-  
vene,

That they can meet no more, though  
broken-hearted;

Though in their souls, which thus each  
other thwarted,

Love was the very root of the fond rage  
Which blighted their life's bloom, and

then departed:  
Itself expired, but leaving them an age

Of years all winters, — war within them-  
selves to wage:

Now, where the quick Rhone thus hath  
cleft his way,

The mightiest of the storms hath ta'en  
his stand:

For here, not one, but many, make their  
play,

And fling their thunder-bolts from hand  
to hand,

Flashing and cast around; of all the band,  
The brightest through these parted hills

hath fork'd  
His lightnings, — as if he did understand,

That in such gaps as desolation work'd,  
There the hot shaft should blast what-

ever therein lurk'd.

Sky, mountains, river, winds, lake, light-  
nings! ye!

With night, and clouds, and thunder, and  
a soul

To make these felt and feeling, well may  
be

Things that have made me watchful; the  
far roll

Of your departing voices, is the knoll  
Of what in me is sleepless, — if I rest.

But where of ye, O tempests! is the goal?  
Are ye like those within the human

breast?  
Or do ye find, at length, like eagles, some

high nest?

Could I embody and unbosom now  
That which is most within me, — could

I wreak  
My thoughts upon expression, and thus

throw  
Soul, heart, mind, passions, feelings,

strong or weak,  
All that I would have sought, and all I

seek,  
Bear, know, feel, and yet breathe — into

one word,  
And that one word were Lightning, I

would speak;

But as it is, I live and die unheard,  
With a most voiceless thought, sheathing  
it as a sword.

The morn is up again, the dewy morn,  
With breath all incense, and with cheek  
all bloom,  
Laughing the clouds away with playful  
scorn,  
And living as if earth contain'd no  
tomb,—

And glowing into day: we may resume  
The march of our existence: and thus I,  
Still on thy shores, fair Leman! may find  
room

And food for meditation, nor pass by  
Much, that may give us pause, if ponder'd  
fittingly.

Clarens! sweet Clarens, birthplace of  
deep Love!

Thine air is the young breath of passion-  
ate thought;

Thy trees take root in Love; the snows  
above

The very Glaciers have his colors caught,  
And sunset into rose-hues sees them  
wrought

By rays which sleep there lovingly; the  
rocks,

The permanent crags, tell here of Love,  
who sought

In them a refuge from the worldly shocks,  
Which stir and sting the soul with hope  
that woos, then mocks.

Clarens! by heavenly feet thy paths are  
trod,—

Undying Love's, who here ascends a  
throne

To which the steps are mountains; where  
the god

Is a pervading life and light, — so shown  
Not on those summits solely, nor alone  
In the still cave and forest; o'er the flower  
His eye is sparkling, and his breath hath  
blown,

His soft and summer breath, whose tender  
power

Passes the strength of storms in their  
most desolate hour.

All things are here of *him*; from the black  
pines,

Which are his shade on high, and the  
loud roar

Of torrents, where he listeneth, to the  
vines

Which slope his green path downward to  
the shore,

Where the bow'd waters meet him, and  
adore,

Kissing his feet with murmurs; and the  
wood,

The covert of old trees, with trunks all  
hoar,

But light leaves, young as joy, stands  
where it stood,

Offering to him, and his, a populous  
solitude;

A populous solitude of bees and birds,  
And fairy-form'd and many color'd  
things,

Who worship him with notes more sweet  
than words,

And innocently open their glad wings,  
Fearless and full of life: the gush of  
springs,

And fall of lofty fountains, and the bend  
Of stirring branches, and the bud which  
brings

The swiftest thought of beauty, here  
extend,

Mingling, and made by Love, unto one  
mighty end.

He who hath loved not, here would learn  
that lore,

And make his heart a spirit; he who  
knows

That tender mystery, will love the more;  
For this is Love's recess, where vain men's  
woes,

And the world's waste, have driven him  
far from those,

For 'tis his nature to advance or die;  
He stands not still, but or decays, or grows

Into a boundless blessing, which may vie  
With the immortal lights, in its eternity!

'Twas not for fiction chose Rousseau  
this spot,

Peopling it with affections; but he found  
It was the scene which Passion must allot

To the mind's purified beings; 'twas the  
ground

Where early Love his Psyche's zone  
unbound,

And hallow'd it with loveliness; 'tis lone,  
And wonderful, and deep, and hath a  
sound,

And sense, and sight of sweetness; here  
     the Rhone  
 Hath spread himself a couch, the Alps  
     have rear'd a throne.

Lausanne! and Ferney! ye have been  
     the abodes  
 Of names which unto you bequeath'd a  
     name;

Mortals, who sought and found, by dan-  
     gerous roads,

A path to perpetuity of fame:  
 They were gigantic minds, and their  
     steep aim

Was, Titan-like, on daring doubts to pile  
 Thoughts which should call down  
     thunder, and the flame

Of Heaven again assail'd, if Heaven the  
     while

On man and man's research could deign  
     do more than smile.

The one<sup>1</sup> was fire and fickleness, a child  
 Most mutable in wishes, but in mind  
 A wit as various, — gay, grave, sage, or  
     wild, —

Historian, bard, philosopher, combined;  
 He multiplied himself among mankind,  
 The Proteus of their talents: But his  
     own

Breathed most in ridicule, — which, as  
     the wind,

Blew where it listed, laying all things  
     prone, —

Now to o'erthrow a fool, and now to  
     shake a throne.

The other,<sup>2</sup> deep and slow, exhausting  
     thought,

And hiving wisdom with each studious  
     year,

In meditation dwelt, with learning  
     wrought,

And shaped his weapon with an edge  
     severe,

Sapping a solemn creed with solemn  
     sneer;

The lord of irony, — that master-spell,  
 Which stung his foes to wrath, which  
     grew from fear,

And doom'd him to the zealot's ready  
     Hell,

Which answers to all doubts so elo-  
     quently well.

<sup>1</sup> Voltaire.

<sup>2</sup> Gibbon.

Yet, peace be with their ashes, — for by  
     them,

If merited, the penalty is paid;  
 It is not ours to judge, — far less condemn:  
 The hour must come when such things  
     shall be made

Known unto all, or hope and dread  
     allay'd

By slumber, on one pillow, in the dust,  
 Which, thus much we are sure, must lie  
     decay'd;

And when it shall revive, as is our trust,  
 'Twill be to be forgiven, or suffer what  
     is just.

But let me quit man's works, again to read  
 His Maker's, spread around me, and  
     suspend

This page, which from my reveries I feed,  
 Until it seems prolonging without end.

The clouds above me, to the white Alps  
     tend,

And I must pierce them, and survey  
     whate'er

May be permitted, as my steps I bend  
 To their most great and growing region,  
     where

The earth to her embrace compels the  
     powers of air.

Italia! too, Italia! looking on thee,  
 Full flashes on the soul the light of ages,  
 Since the fierce Carthaginian almost won  
     thee,

To the last halo of the chiefs and sages  
 Who glorify thy consecrated pages;

Thou wert the throne and grave of em-  
     pires; still,

The fount at which the panting mind  
     assuages

Her thirst of knowledge, quaffing there  
     her fill,

Flows from the eternal source of Rome's  
     imperial hill.

Thus far have I proceeded in a theme  
 Renew'd with no kind auspices: to feel  
 We are not what we have been, and to  
     deem

We are not what we should be, and to  
     steel

The heart against itself; and to conceal,  
 What a proud caution, love, or hate, or  
     ought, —

Passion or feeling, purpose, grief or  
     zeal, —

Which is the tyrant spirit of our thought,  
Is a stern task of soul: — No matter, —  
it is taught.

And for these words, thus woven into  
song,

It may be that they are a harmless wile, —  
The coloring of the scenes which fleet  
along,

Which I would seize, in passing, to beguile  
My breast, or that of others, for a while.  
Fame is the thirst of youth, but I am not  
So young as to regard men's frown or  
smile.

As loss or guerdon of a glorious lot:  
I stood and stand alone, — remember'd or  
forgot.

I have not loved the world, nor the world  
me;

I have not flatter'd its rank breath, nor  
bow'd

To its idolatries a patient knee,  
Nor coin'd my cheek to smiles, nor cried  
aloud

In worship of an echo; in the crowd  
They could not deem me one of such; I  
stood

Among them, but not of them; in a  
shroud

Of thoughts which were not their  
thoughts, and still could,

Had I not filed my mind, which thus  
itself subdued.

I have not loved the world, nor the world  
me, —

But let us part fair foes; I do believe,  
Though I have found them not, that  
there may be

Words which are things, hopes which will  
not deceive,

And virtues which are merciful, nor  
weave

Snares for the failing; I would also deem  
O'er others' griefs that some sincerely  
grieve;

That two, or one, are almost what they  
seem,

That goodness is no name, and happiness  
no dream.

My daughter! with thy name this song  
begun;

My daughter! with thy name thus much  
shall end;

I see thee not, I hear thee not, but none  
Can be so wrapt in thee; thou art the  
friend

To whom the shadows of far years extend;  
Albeit my brow thou never shouldst  
behold,

My voice shall with thy future visions  
blend,

And reach into thy heart, when mine is  
cold,

A token and a tone, even from thy father's  
mould.

To aid thy mind's development, to watch  
Thy dawn of little joys, to sit and see  
Almost thy very growth, to view thee  
catch

Knowledge of objects, — wonders yet to  
thee!

To hold thee lightly on a gentle knee,  
And print on thy soft cheek a parent's  
kiss, —

This, it should seem, was not reserved for  
me;

Yet this was in my nature: as it is,  
I know not what is there, yet something  
like to this.

Yet, though dull Hate as duty should be  
taught,

I know that thou wilt love me; though  
my name

Should be shut from thee, as a spell still  
fraught

With desolation, and a broken claim;  
Though the grave closed between us, —  
'twere the same,

I know that thou wilt love me; though  
to drain

My blood from out thy being were an  
aim,

And an attainment, — all would be in  
vain, —

Still thou wouldst love me, still that more  
than life retain.

The child of love, though born in bitter-  
ness,

And nurtured in convulsion. Of thy sire  
These were the elements, and thine no  
less.

As yet such are around thee, but thy fire  
Shall be more temper'd, and thy hope far  
higher.

Sweet be thy cradled slumbers! O'er the  
sea



And from the mountains where I now  
 respire,  
 Fain would I waft such blessing upon thee,  
 As with a sigh, I deem thou might'st  
 have been to me.

*May-June, 1816. November 18, 1816.*

### SONNET ON CHILLON

ETERNAL Spirit of the chainless Mind!  
 Brightest in dungeons, Liberty! thou art,  
 For there thy habitation is the heart —  
 The heart which love of thee alone can  
 bind;  
 And when thy sons to fetters are con-  
 sign'd —

To fetters, and the damp vault's dayless  
 gloom,  
 Their country conquers with their mar-  
 tyrdom,  
 And Freedom's fame finds wings on every  
 wind.

Chillon! thy prison is a holy place,  
 And thy sad floor an altar — for 'twas  
 trod,  
 Until his very steps have left a trace  
 Worn, as if thy cold pavement were a sod,  
 By Bonnivard! — May none those marks  
 efface!

For they appeal from tyranny to God.  
*June, 1816. December 5, 1816.*

### THE PRISONER OF CHILLON

My hair is gray, but not with years,  
 Nor grew it white  
 In a single night,  
 As men's have grown from sudden fears;  
 My limbs are bow'd, though not with toil,  
 But rusted with a vile repose,  
 For they have been a dungeon's spoil,  
 And mine has been the fate of those  
 To whom the goodly earth and air  
 Are bann'd, and barr'd — forbidden fare;  
 But this was for my father's faith  
 I suffer'd chains and courted death;  
 That father perish'd at the stake  
 For tenets he would not forsake;  
 And for the same his lineal race  
 In darkness found a dwelling-place;  
 We were seven — who now are one,  
 Six in youth, and one in age,  
 Finish'd as they had begun,  
 Proud of Persecution's rage;

One in fire, and two in field  
 Their belief with blood have seal'd,  
 Dying as their father died,  
 For the God their foes denied;  
 Three were in a dungeon cast,  
 Of whom this wreck is left the last.

There are seven pillars of Gothic mould,  
 In Chillon's dungeons deep and old,  
 There are seven columns, massy and  
 gray,

Dim with a dull imprison'd ray,  
 A sunbeam which hath lost its way  
 And through the crevice and the cleft  
 Of the thick wall is fallen and left;  
 Creeping o'er the floor so damp,  
 Like a marsh's meteor lamp:

And in each pillar there is a ring,  
 And in each ring there is a chain;  
 That iron is a cankering thing,

For in these limbs its teeth remain,  
 With marks that will not wear away,  
 Till I have done with this new day,  
 Which now is painful to these eyes,  
 Which have not seen the sun so rise  
 For years — I cannot count them o'er,  
 I lost their long and heavy score,  
 When my last brother droop'd and died  
 And I lay living by his side.

They chain'd us each to a column stone  
 And we were three — yet, each alone,  
 We could not move a single pace,  
 We could not see each other's face,  
 But with that pale and livid light  
 That made us strangers in our sight:  
 And thus together — yet apart,  
 Fetter'd in hand, but join'd in heart,  
 'Twas still some solace, in the dearth  
 Of the pure elements of earth,  
 To hearken to each other's speech,  
 And each turn comfortor to each  
 With some new hope or legend old,  
 Or song heroically bold;  
 But even these at length grew cold.  
 Our voices took a dreary tone,  
 An echo of the dungeon stone,

A grating sound, not full and free,  
 As they of yore were wont to be;  
 It might be fancy, but to me  
 They never sounded like our own.

I was the eldest of the three,  
 And to uphold and cheer the rest  
 I ought to do — and did my best —  
 And each did well in his degree.

The youngest, whom my father loved,  
 Because our mother's brow was given  
 To him, with eyes as blue as heaven —  
 For him my soul was sorely moved;  
 And truly might it be distress'd  
 To see such bird in such a nest;  
 For he was beautiful as day —  
 (When day was beautiful to me  
 As to young eagles, being free) —  
 A polar day, which will not see  
 A sunset till its summer's gone,  
 Its sleepless summer of long light,  
 The snow-clad offspring of the sun:  
 And thus he was as pure and bright,  
 And in his natural spirit gay,  
 With tears for nought but others' ills,  
 And then they flow'd like mountain rills,  
 Unless he could assuage the woe  
 Which he abhor'd to view below.

The other was as pure of mind,  
 But form'd to combat with his kind;  
 Strong in his frame, and of a mood  
 Which 'gainst the world in war had stood,  
 And perish'd in the foremost rank  
 With joy: — but not in chains to pine:  
 His spirit wither'd with their clank,  
 I saw it silently decline —  
 And so perchance in sooth did mine:  
 But yet I forced it on to cheer  
 Those relics of a home so dear.  
 He was a hunter of the hills,  
 Had follow'd there the deer and wolf;  
 To him his dungeon was a gulf,  
 And fetter'd feet the worst of ills.

Lake Leman lies by Chillon's walls:  
 A thousand feet in depth below  
 Its massy waters meet and flow;  
 Thus much the fathom-line was sent  
 From Chillon's snow-white battlement,  
 Which round about the wave intrals:  
 A double dungeon wall and wave  
 Have made — and like a living grave  
 Below the surface of the lake  
 The dark vault lies wherein we lay,  
 We heard it ripple night and day;  
 Sounding o'er our heads it knock'd;  
 And I have felt the winter's spray  
 Wash through the bars when winds were  
 high  
 And wanton in the happy sky;  
 And then the very rock hath rock'd,  
 And I have felt it shake, unshock'd  
 Because I could have smiled to see  
 The death that would have set me free.

I said my nearer brother pined,  
 I said his mighty heart declined,  
 He loathed and put away his food;  
 It was not that 'twas coarse and rude,  
 For we were used to hunter's fare,  
 And for the like had little care:  
 The milk drawn from the mountain goat  
 Was changed for water from the moat,  
 Our bread was such as captives' tears  
 Have moisten'd many a thousand years,  
 Since man first pent his fellow men  
 Like brutes within an iron den;  
 But what were these to us or him?  
 These wasted not his heart or limb;  
 My brother's soul was of that mould  
 Which in a palace had grown cold,  
 Had his free breathing been denied  
 The range of the steep mountain's side;  
 But why delay the truth? — he died.  
 I saw, and could not hold his head,  
 Nor reach his dying hand — nor dead, —  
 Though hard I strove, but strove in  
 vain  
 To rend and gnash my bonds in twain.  
 He died, and they unlock'd his chain,  
 And scoop'd for him a shallow grave  
 Even from the cold earth of our cave,  
 I begg'd them as a boon to lay  
 His corse in dust whereon the day  
 Might shine — it was a foolish thought,  
 But then within my brain it wrought,  
 That even in death his freeborn breast  
 In such a dungeon could not rest.  
 I might have spared my idle prayer —  
 They coldly laugh'd, and laid him there:  
 The flat and turfless earth above  
 The being we so much did love;  
 His empty chain above it leant,  
 Such murder's fitting monument!

But he, the favorite and the flower,  
 Most cherish'd since his natal hour,  
 His mother's image in fair face,  
 The infant love of all his race,  
 His martyr'd father's dearest thought,  
 My latest care, for whom I sought  
 To hoard my life, that his might be  
 Less wretched now, and one day free;  
 He, too, who yet had held untired  
 A spirit natural or inspired —  
 He, too, was struck, and day by day  
 Was wither'd on the stalk away.  
 Oh, God! it is a fearful thing  
 To see the human soul take wing  
 In any shape, in any mood:  
 I've seen it rushing forth in blood,

I've seen it on the breaking ocean  
 Strive with a swoln convulsive motion,  
 I've seen the sick and ghastly bed  
 Of Sin delirious with its dread;  
 But these were horrors — this was woe  
 Unmix'd with such — but sure and slow:  
 He faded, and so calm and meek,  
 So softly worn, so sweetly weak,  
 So tearless, yet so tender, kind,  
 And grieved for those he left behind;  
 With all the while a cheek whose bloom  
 Was as a mockery of the tomb,  
 Whose tints as gently sunk away  
 As a departing rainbow's ray;  
 An eye of most transparent light,  
 That almost made the dungeon bright,  
 And not a word of murmur, not  
 A groan o'er his untimely lot, —  
 A little talk of better days,  
 A little hope my own to raise,  
 For I was sunk in silence — lost  
 In this last loss, of all the most;  
 And then the sighs he would suppress  
 Of fainting nature's feebleness,  
 More slowly drawn, grew less and less:  
 I listen'd, but I could not hear;  
 I call'd, for I was wild with fear;  
 I know 'twas hopeless, but my dread  
 Would not be thus admonished;  
 I call'd, and thought I heard a sound —  
 I burst my chain with one strong bound,  
 And rush'd to him: — I found him not,  
 I only stirr'd in this black spot,  
 I only lived, I only drew  
 The accursed breath of dungeon-dew;  
 The last, the sole, the dearest link  
 Between me and the eternal brink,  
 Which bound me to my failing race,  
 Was broken in this fatal place.  
 One on the earth, and one beneath —  
 My brothers — both had ceased to  
 breathe:

I took that hand which lay so still,  
 Alas! my own was full as chill;  
 I had not strength to stir, or strive,  
 But felt that I was still alive —  
 A frantic feeling, when we know  
 That what we love shall ne'er be so.

I know not why  
 I could not die,  
 I had no earthly hope but faith,  
 And that forbade a selfish death.

What next befell me then and there  
 I know not well — I never knew —  
 First came the loss of light, and air,

And then of darkness too:  
 I had no thought, no feeling — none —  
 Among the stones I stood a stone,  
 And was, scarce conscious what I wist,  
 As shrubless crags within the mist;  
 For all was blank, and bleak, and gray;  
 It was not night, it was not day;  
 It was not even the dungeon-light,  
 So hateful to my heavy sight,  
 But vacancy absorbing space,  
 And fixedness without a place;  
 There were no stars, no earth, no time,  
 No check, no change, no good, no crime,  
 But silence, and a stirless breath  
 Which neither was of life nor death;  
 A sea of stagnant idleness,  
 Blind, boundless, mute, and motionless!

A light broke in upon my brain, —  
 It was the carol of a bird;  
 It ceased, and then it came again,  
 The sweetest song ear ever heard,  
 And mine was thankful till my eyes  
 Ran over with the glad surprise,  
 And they that moment could not see  
 I was the mate of misery;  
 But then by dull degrees came back  
 My senses to their wonted track;  
 I saw the dungeon walls and floor  
 Close slowly round me as before,  
 I saw the glimmer of the sun  
 Creeping as it before had done,  
 But through the crevice where it came  
 That bird was perch'd, as fond and tame,

And tamer than upon the tree;  
 A lovely bird, with azure wings,  
 And song that said a thousand things,  
 And seem'd to say them all for me!

I never saw its like before,  
 I ne'er shall see its likeness more:  
 It seem'd like me to want a mate,  
 But was not half so desolate,  
 And it was come to love me when  
 None lived to love me so again,  
 And cheering from my dungeon's brink,  
 Had brought me back to feel and think.  
 I know not if it late were free,

Or broke its cage to perch on mine,  
 But knowing well captivity,  
 Sweet bird! I could not wish for thine!

Or if it were, in winged guise,  
 A visitant from Paradise;  
 For — Heaven forgive that thought! the  
 while  
 Which made me both to weep and  
 smile —

I sometimes deem'd that it might be  
 My brother's soul come down to me;  
 But then at last away it flew,  
 And then 'twas mortal well I knew,  
 For he would never thus have flown,  
 And left me twice so doubly lone,  
 Lone as the corse within its shroud,  
 Lone as a solitary cloud, —  
 A single cloud on a sunny day,  
 While all the rest of heaven is clear,  
 A frown upon the atmosphere,  
 That hath no business to appear  
 When skies are blue, and earth is gay.

A kind of change came in my fate,  
 My keepers grew compassionate;  
 I know not what had made them so,  
 They were inured to sights of woe,  
 But so it was: — my broken chain  
 With links unfasten'd did remain,  
 And it was liberty to stride  
 Along my cell from side to side,  
 And up and down, and then athwart,  
 And tread it over every part;  
 And round the pillars one by one,  
 Returning where my walk begun,  
 Avoiding only, as I trod,  
 My brothers' graves without a sod;  
 For if I thought with heedless tread  
 My step profaned their lowly bed,  
 My breath came gaspingly and thick,  
 And my crush'd heart fell blind and sick.

I made a footing in the wall,  
 It was not therefrom to escape,  
 For I had buried one and all  
 Who loved me in a human shape;  
 And the whole earth would henceforth be  
 A wider prison unto me:  
 No child, no sire, no kin had I,  
 No partner in my misery;  
 I thought of this, and I was glad,  
 For thought of them had made me mad;  
 But I was curious to ascend  
 To my barr'd windows, and to bend  
 Once more, upon the mountains high,  
 The quiet of a loving eye.

I saw them, and they were the same,  
 They were not changed like me in frame;  
 I saw their thousand years of snow  
 On high — their wide long lake below,  
 And the blue Rhone in fullest flow;  
 I heard the torrents leap and gush  
 O'er channell'd rock and broken bush;  
 I saw the white-wall'd distant town,  
 And whiter sails go skimming down;

And then there was a little isle,  
 Which in my very face did smile,  
 The only one in view;  
 A small green isle, it seem'd no more,  
 Scarce broader than my dungeon floor,  
 But in it there were three tall trees,  
 And o'er it blew the mountain breeze,  
 And by it there were waters flowing,  
 And on it there were young flowers grow-  
 ing,

Of gentle breath and hue.  
 The fish swam by the castle wall,  
 And they seem'd joyous each and all;  
 The eagle rode the rising blast,  
 Methought he never flew so fast  
 As then to me he seem'd to fly;  
 And then new tears came in my eye,  
 And I felt troubled — and would fain  
 I had not left my recent chain;  
 And when I did descend again,  
 The darkness of my dim abode  
 Fell on me as a heavy load;  
 It was as is a new-dug grave,  
 Closing o'er one we sought to save, —  
 And yet my glance, too much oppress,  
 Had almost need of such a rest.

It might be months, or years, or days,  
 I kept no count, I took no note,  
 I had no hope my eyes to raise,  
 And clear them of their dreary mote;  
 At last men came to set me free;  
 I ask'd not why, and reck'd not where;  
 It was at length the same to me,  
 Fetter'd or fetterless to be,  
 I learn'd to love despair.

And thus when they appear'd at last,  
 And all my bonds aside were cast,  
 These heavy walls to me had grown  
 A hermitage — and all my own!  
 And half I felt as they were come  
 To tear me from a second home:  
 With spiders I had friendship made,  
 And watch'd them in their sullen trade,  
 Had seen the mice by moonlight play,  
 And why should I feel less than they?  
 We were all inmates of one place,  
 And I, the monarch of each race,  
 Had power to kill — yet, strange to tell!  
 In quiet we had learn'd to dwell;  
 My very chains and I grew friends,  
 So much a long communion tends  
 To make us what we are: — even I  
 Regain'd my freedom with a sigh.

*June 27-29. — July 10, 1816.*

December 5, 1816.



## STANZAS TO AUGUSTA

THOUGH the day of my destiny's over,  
 And the star of my fate hath declined,  
 Thy soft heart refused to discover  
 The faults which so many could find.  
 Though thy soul with my grief was acquainted,  
 It shrunk not to share it with me,  
 And the love which my spirit hath painted  
 It never hath found but in *thee*.

Then when nature around me is smiling,  
 The last smile which answers to mine,  
 I do not believe it beguiling,  
 Because it reminds me of thine;  
 And when winds are at war with the ocean,  
 As the breasts I believed in with me,  
 If their billows excite an emotion,  
 It is that they bear me from *thee*.

Though the rock of my last hope is shiver'd,  
 And its fragments are sunk in the wave,  
 Though I feel that my soul is deliver'd  
 To pain — it shall not be its slave.  
 There is many a pang to pursue me:  
 They may crush, but they shall not condemn;  
 They may torture, but shall not subdue me;  
 'Tis of *thee* that I think — not of them.

Though human, thou didst not deceive me,  
 Though woman, thou didst not forsake,  
 Though loved, thou forborest to grieve me,  
 Though slander'd, thou never couldst shake;  
 Though trusted, thou didst not disclaim me,  
 Though parted, it was not to fly,  
 Though watchful, 'twas not to defame me,  
 Nor, mute, that the world might belie.

Yet I blame not the world, nor despise it,  
 Nor the war of the many with one;  
 If my soul was not fitted to prize it,  
 'Twas folly not sooner to shun:  
 And if dearly that error hath cost me,  
 And more than I once could foresee,  
 I have found that, whatever it lost me,  
 It could not deprive me of *thee*.

From the wreck of the past, which hath perish'd,  
 Thus much I at least may recall,  
 It hath taught me that what I most cherish'd  
 Deserved to be dearest of all:  
 In the desert a fountain is springing,  
 In the wide waste there still is a tree,  
 And a bird in the solitude singing,  
 Which speaks to my spirit of *thee*.  
*July 24, 1816. December 5, 1816.*

## EPISTLE TO AUGUSTA

My sister! my sweet sister! if a name  
 Dearer and purer were, it should be thine;  
 Mountains and seas divide us, but I claim  
 No tears, but tenderness to answer mine:  
 Go where I will, to me thou art the same —  
 A loved regret which I would not resign.  
 There yet are two things in my destiny, —  
 A world to roam through, and a home with thee.

The first were nothing — had I still the last,  
 It were the haven of my happiness;  
 But other claims and other ties thou hast,  
 And mine is not the wish to make them less.  
 A strange doom is thy father's son's, and past  
 Recalling, as it lies beyond redress;  
 Reversed for him our grandsire's fate of yore, —  
 He had no rest at sea, nor I on shore.

If my inheritance of storms hath been  
 In other elements, and on the rocks  
 Of perils, overlook'd or unforeseen,  
 I have sustain'd my share of worldly shocks,  
 The fault was mine; nor do I seek to screen  
 My errors with defensive paradox;  
 I have been cunning in mine overthrow,  
 The careful pilot of my proper woe.

Mine were my faults, and mine be their reward.  
 My whole life was a contest, since the day  
 That gave me being, gave me that which marr'd



The gift, — a fate, or will, that walk'd  
astray;  
And I at times have found the struggle  
hard,  
And thought of shaking off my bonds of  
clay:  
But now I fain would for a time survive,  
If but to see what next can well arrive.

Kingdoms and empires in my little day  
I have outlived, and yet I am not old;  
And when I look on this, the petty spray  
Of my own years of trouble, which have  
roll'd

Like a wild bay of breakers, melts away:  
Something — I know not what — does  
still uphold

A spirit of slight patience; — not in vain,  
Even for its own sake, do we purchase  
pain.

Perhaps the workings of defiance stir  
Within me — or perhaps a cold despair,  
Brought on when ills habitually recur, —  
Perhaps a kinder clime, or purer air,  
(For even to this may change of soul  
refer,

And with light armor we may learn to  
bear,)

Have taught me a strange quiet, which  
was not

The chief companion of a calmer lot.

I feel almost at times as I have felt  
In happy childhood; trees, and flowers,  
and brooks,  
Which do remember me of where I dwelt  
Ere my young mind was sacrificed to  
books,

Come as of yore upon me, and can melt  
My heart with recognition of their looks;  
And even at moments I could think I see  
Some living thing to love — but none like  
thee.

Here are the Alpine landscapes which  
create

A fund for contemplation; — to admire  
Is a brief feeling of a trivial date;

But something worthier do such scenes  
inspire;

Here to be lonely is not desolate,  
For much I view which I could most de-  
sire,

And, above all, a lake I can behold  
Lovelier, not dearer, than our own of old.

Oh that thou wert but with me! — but I  
grow

The fool of my own wishes, and forget  
The solitude which I have vaunted so  
Has lost its praise in this but one regret;  
There may be others which I less may  
show! —

I am not of the plaintive mood, and yet  
I feel an ebb in my philosophy,  
And the tide rising in my alter'd eye.

I did remind thee of our own dear Lake  
By the old Hall which may be mine no  
more.

Leman's is fair; but think not I forsake  
The sweet remembrance of a dearer  
shore:

Sad havoc Time must with my memory  
make,

Ere *that* or *thou* can fade these eyes before;  
Though, like all things which I have  
loved, they are

Resign'd for ever, or divided far.

The world is all before me; I but ask  
Of Nature that with which she will  
comply —

It is but in her summer's sun to bask,  
To mingle with the quiet of her sky,  
To see her gentle face without a mask,  
And never gaze on it with apathy.  
She was my early friend, and now shall be  
My sister — till I look again on thee.

I can reduce all feelings but this one;  
And that I would not; — for at length I  
see

Such scenes as those wherein my life  
began.

The earliest — even the only paths for  
me —

Had I but sooner learnt the crowd to  
shun,

I had been better than I now can be;  
The passions which have torn me would  
have slept;

I had not suffer'd and *thou* hadst not  
wept.

With false Ambition what had I to do?  
Little with Love, and least of all with  
Fame;

And yet they came unsought, and with  
me grew,

And made me all which they can make  
— a name.

Yet this was not the end I did pursue;  
 Surely I once beheld a nobler aim.  
 But all is over — I am one the more  
 To baffled millions which have gone  
     before.

And for the future, this world's future may  
 From me demand but little of my care;  
 I have outlived myself by many a day;  
 Having survived so many things that  
     were;  
 My years have been no slumber, but the  
     prey  
 Of ceaseless vigils; for I had the share  
 Of life which might have fill'd a century,  
 Before its fourth in time had pass'd me by.

And for the remnant which may be to  
     come  
 I am content; and for the past I feel  
 Not thankless, — for within the crowded  
     sum  
 Of struggles, happiness at times would  
     steal,  
 And for the present, I would not benumb  
 My feelings further. — Nor shall I conceal  
 That with all this I still can look around,  
 And worship Nature with a thought  
     profound.

For thee, my own sweet sister, in thy heart  
 I know myself secure, as thou in mine;  
 We were and are — I am, even as thou  
     art —  
 Beings who ne'er each other can resign:  
 It is the same, together or apart,  
 From life's commencement to its slow  
     decline  
 We are entwined — let death come slow  
     or fast,  
 The tie which bound the first endures the  
     last!      *July, 1816. 1830.*

#### STANZAS FOR MUSIC

THEY say that Hope is happiness;  
 But genuine Love must prize the past,  
 And Memory wakes the thoughts that  
     bless:  
 They rose the first — they set the last —  
 And all that Memory loves the most  
 Was once our only Hope to be,  
 And all that Hope adored and lost  
     Hath melted into Memory.

Alas! it is delusion all;  
 The future cheats us from afar,  
 Nor can we be what we recall,  
 Nor dare we think on what we are.  
     ? . . . 1829.

#### DARKNESS

I HAD a dream, which was not all a dream.  
 The bright sun was extinguish'd, and the  
     stars  
 Did wander darkling in the eternal space,  
 Rayless, and pathless, and the icy earth  
 Swung blind and blackening in the moon-  
     less air;  
 Morn came and went — and came, and  
     brought no day,  
 And men forgot their passions in the  
     dread  
 Of this their desolation; and all hearts  
 Were chill'd into a selfish prayer for  
     light;  
 And they did live by watchfires — and  
     the thrones,  
 The palaces of crowned kings — the huts,  
 The habitations of all things which dwell,  
 Were burnt for beacons; cities were  
     consumed,  
 And men were gather'd round their blaz-  
     ing homes  
 To look once more into each other's face;  
 Happy were those who dwelt within the  
     eye  
 Of the volcanos, and their mountain-  
     torch;  
 A fearful hope was all the world con-  
     tain'd;  
 Forests were set on fire — but hour by  
     hour  
 They fell and faded — and the crackling  
     trunks  
 Extinguish'd with a crash — and all was  
     black.  
 The brows of men by the despairing light  
 Wore an unearthly aspect, as by fits  
 The flashes fell upon them; some lay  
     down  
 And hid their eyes and wept; and some  
     did rest  
 Their chins upon their clenched hands,  
     and smiled;  
 And others hurried to and fro, and fed  
 Their funeral piles with fuel, and look'd  
     up  
 With mad disquietude on the dull sky,

The pall of a past world; and then again  
 With curses cast them down upon the  
   dust,  
 And gnash'd their teeth and howl'd: the  
   wild birds shriek'd  
 And, terrified, did flutter on the ground,  
 And flap their useless wings; the wildest  
   brutes  
 Came tame and tremulous; and vipers  
   crawl'd  
 And twined themselves among the multi-  
   tude,  
 Hissing, but stingless — they were slain  
   for food!  
 And War, which for a moment was no  
   more,  
 Did glut himself again: — a meal was  
   bought  
 With blood, and each sate sullenly apart  
 Gorging himself in gloom: no love was  
   left;  
 All earth was but one thought — and that  
   was death  
 Immediate and inglorious; and the pang  
 Of famine fed upon all entrails — men  
 Died, and their bones were tombless as  
   their flesh;  
 The meagre by the meagre were devour'd,  
 Even dogs assail'd their masters, all save  
   one,  
 And he was faithful to a corse, and kept  
 The birds and beasts and famish'd men  
   at bay,  
 Till hunger clung them, or the dropping  
   dead  
 Lured their lank jaws; himself sought  
   out no food,  
 But with a piteous and perpetual moan,  
 And a quick desolate cry, licking the  
   hand  
 Which answer'd not with a caress — he  
   died.  
 The crowd was famish'd by degrees;  
   but two  
 Of an enormous city did survive,  
 And they were enemies: they met beside  
 The dying embers of an altar-place  
 Where had been heap'd a mass of holy  
   things  
 For an unholy usage; they raked up,  
 And shivering scraped with their cold  
   skeleton hands  
 The feeble ashes, and their feeble breath  
 Blew for a little life, and made a flame  
 Which was a mockery; then they lifted up  
 Their eyes as it grew lighter, and beheld,

Each other's aspects — saw, and shriek'd,  
   and died —  
 Even of their mutual hideousness they  
   died,  
 Unknowing who he was upon whose brow  
 Famine had written Fiend. The world  
   was void,  
 The populous and the powerful was a  
   lump,  
 Seasonless, herbless, treeless, manless,  
   lifeless,  
 A lump of death — a chaos of hard clay.  
 The rivers, lakes, and ocean all stood  
   still,  
 And nothing stirr'd within their silent  
   depths;  
 Ships sailorless lay rotting on the sea,  
 And their masts fell down piecemeal:  
   as they dropp'd  
 They slept on the abyss without a  
   surge —  
 The waves were dead; the tides were in  
   their grave,  
 The moon, their mistress, had expired  
   before;  
 The winds were wither'd in the stagnant  
   air,  
 And the clouds perish'd; Darkness had  
   no need  
 Of aid from them — She was the Uni-  
   verse.  
*July, 1816. December 5, 1816.*

## PROMETHEUS

TITAN! to whose immortal eyes  
   The sufferings of mortality,  
   Seen in their sad reality,  
 Were not as things that gods despise;  
 What was thy pity's recompense?  
 A silent suffering, and intense;  
 The rock, the vulture, and the chain,  
 All that the proud can feel of pain,  
 The agony they do not show,  
 The suffocating sense of woe,  
   Which speaks but in its loneliness,  
 And then is jealous lest the sky  
 Should have a listener, nor will sigh  
   Until its voice is echoless.  
 Titan! to thee the strife was given  
   Between the suffering and the will,  
   Which torture where they cannot kill;  
 And the inexorable Heaven,  
 And the deaf tyranny of Fate,  
 The ruling principle of Hate,

Which for its pleasure doth create  
 The things it may annihilate,  
 Refused thee even the boon to die;  
 The wretched gift eternity  
 Was thine — and thou hast borne it well.  
 All that the Thunderer wrung from thee  
 Was but the menace which flung back  
 On him the torments of thy rack;  
 The fate thou didst so well foresee,  
 But would not to appease him tell;  
 And in thy Silence was his Sentence,  
 And in his Soul a vain repentance,  
 And evil dread so ill dissembled,  
 That in his hand the lightnings  
 trembled.

Thy Godlike crime was to be kind,  
 To render with thy precepts less  
 The sum of human wretchedness,  
 And strengthen Man with his own mind;  
 But baffled as thou wert from high,  
 Still in thy patient energy,  
 In the endurance, and repulse  
 Of thine impenetrable Spirit,  
 Which Earth and Heaven could not con-  
 vulse,  
 A mighty lesson we inherit:  
 Thou art a symbol and a sign  
 To Mortals of their fate and force;  
 Like thee, Man is in part divine,  
 A troubled stream from a pure source;  
 And Man in portions can foresee  
 His own funereal destiny;  
 His wretchedness, and his resistance,  
 And his sad unallied existence:

To which his Spirit may oppose  
 Itself — and equal to all woes,  
 And a firm will, and a deep sense,  
 Which even in torture can descry  
 Its own concentr'd recompense,  
 Triumphant where it dare defy,  
 And making Death a Victory.  
*July, 1816. December, 1816.*

### SONNET TO LAKE LEMAN

ROUSSEAU — Voltaire — our Gibbon —  
 and De Staël —  
 Lemans! these names are worthy of thy  
 shore,  
 Thy shore of names like these! wert  
 thou no more  
 Their memory thy remembrance would  
 recall:  
 To them thy banks were lovely as to all,  
 But they have made them lovelier, for  
 the lore  
 Of mighty minds doth hallow in the  
 core  
 Of human hearts the ruin of a wall  
 Where dwelt the wise and wondrous;  
 but by thee  
 How much more, Lake of Beauty! do  
 we feel,  
 In sweetly gliding o'er thy crystal sea,  
 The wild glow of that not ungentle zeal,  
 Which of the heirs of immortality  
 Is proud, and makes the breath of glory  
 real!  
*July, 1816. December 5, 1816.*

## MANFRED

### A DRAMATIC POEM

"There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,  
 Than are dreamt of in your philosophy."

#### DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

MANFRED	WITCH OF THE
CHAMOIS HUNTER	ALPS
ABBOT OF	ARIMANES
ST. MAURICE	NEMESIS
MANUEL	THE DESTINIES
HERMAN	SPIRITS, &c.

*The Scene of the Drama is amongst the  
 Higher Alps — partly in the Castle  
 of Manfred, and partly in the Moun-  
 tains.*

#### ACT I

SCENE I. — MANFRED *alone.* — *Scene, a  
 Gothic Gallery. — Time, Midnight.*  
*Man.* The lamp must be replenish'd,  
 but even then  
 It will not burn so long as I must watch:  
 My slumbers — if I slumber — are not  
 sleep,  
 But a continuance of enduring thought,  
 Which then I can resist not: in my heart  
 There is a vigil, and these eyes but close



To look within; and yet I live, and bear  
The aspect and the form of breathing  
men.

But grief should be the instructor of the  
wise;

Sorrow is knowledge: they who know the  
most

Must mourn the deepest o'er the fatal  
truth,

The Tree of Knowledge is not that of  
Life.

Philosophy and science, and the springs  
Of wonder, and the wisdom of the world,  
I have essay'd, and in my mind there is  
A power to make these subject to itself —  
But they avail not: I have done men good,  
And I have met with good even among  
men —

But this avail'd not: I have had my foes,  
And none have baffled, many fallen before  
me —

But this avail'd not: — Good, or evil, life,  
Powers, passions, all I see in other beings,  
Have been to me as rain unto the sands,  
Since that all-nameless hour. I have no  
dread,

And feel the curse to have no natural fear,  
Nor fluttering throb, that beats with  
hopes or wishes,

Or lurking love of something on the earth.  
Now to my task. —

Mysterious agency!

Ye spirits of the unbounded Universe!  
Whom I have sought in darkness and in  
light —

Ye, who do compass earth about, and  
dwell

In subtler essence — ye, to whom the tops  
Of mountains inaccessible are haunts,  
And earth's and ocean's caves familiar  
things —

I call upon ye by the written charm  
Which gives me power upon you — Rise!  
Appear! [A pause.

They come not yet. — Now by the voice  
of him

Who is the first among you — by this sign,  
Which makes you tremble — by the  
claims of him

Who is undying, — Rise! Appear! —  
Appear! [A pause.

If it be so — Spirits of earth and air,  
Ye shall not thus elude me: by a power,  
Deeper than all yet urged, a tyrant-spell,  
Which had its birthplace in a star con-  
demn'd,

The burning wreck of a demolish'd  
world,

A wandering hell in the eternal space;  
By the strong curse which is upon my  
soul,

The thought which is within me and  
around me,

I do compel ye to my will — Appear!

[A star is seen at the darker end of  
the gallery: it is stationary; and  
a voice is heard singing.

#### FIRST SPIRIT

Mortal! to thy bidding bow'd,  
From my mansion in the cloud,  
Which the breath of twilight builds,  
And the summer's sunset gilds  
With the azure and vermillion,  
Which is mixed for my pavilion;  
Though thy quest may be forbidden,  
On a star-beam I have ridden:  
To thine adjuration bow'd,  
Mortal — be thy wish avow'd!

#### SECOND SPIRIT

Mont Blanc is the monarch of mountains;  
They crown'd him long ago  
On a throne of rocks, in a robe of clouds,  
With a diadem of snow.  
Around his waist are forests braced,  
The Avalanche in his hand;  
But ere it fall, that thundering ball  
Must pause for my command.  
The Glacier's cold and restless mass  
Moves onward day by day;  
But I am he who bids it pass,  
Or with its ice delay.  
I am the spirit of the place,  
Could make the mountain bow  
And quiver to his cavern'd base —  
And what with me wouldst Thou?

#### THIRD SPIRIT

In the blue depth of the waters,  
Where the wave hath no strife,  
Where the wind is a stranger,  
And the sea-snake hath life,  
Where the Mermaid is decking  
Her green hair with shells,  
Like the storm on the surface  
Came the sound of thy spells;  
O'er my calm Hall of Coral  
The deep echo roll'd —  
To the Spirit of Ocean  
Thy wishes unfold!



## FOURTH SPIRIT

Where the slumbering earthquake  
Lies pillow'd on fire,  
And the lakes of bitumen  
Rise boilingly higher;  
Where the roots of the Andes  
Strike deep in the earth,  
As their summits to heaven  
Shoot soaringly forth;  
I have quitted my birthplace,  
Thy bidding to bide —  
Thy spell hath subdued me,  
Thy will be my guide!

## FIFTH SPIRIT

I am the Rider of the wind,  
The stirrer of the storm;  
The hurricane I left behind  
Is yet with lightning warm;  
To speed to thee, o'er shore and sea  
I swept upon the blast:  
The fleet I met sail'd well, and yet  
'Twill sink ere night be past.

## SIXTH SPIRIT

My dwelling is the shadow of the night,  
Why doth thy magic torture me with  
light?

## SEVENTH SPIRIT

The star which rules thy destiny  
Was ruled, ere earth began, by me:  
It was a world as fresh and fair  
As e'er revolved round sun in air;  
Its course was free and regular,  
Space bosom'd not a lovelier star.  
The hour arrived — and it became  
A wandering mass of shapeless flame,  
A pathless comet, and a curse,  
The menace of the universe;  
Still rolling on with innate force,  
Without a sphere, without a course,  
A bright deformity on high,  
The monster of the upper sky!  
And thou! beneath its influence born —  
Thou worm! whom I obey and scorn —  
Forced by a power (which is not thine,  
And lent thee but to make thee mine)  
For this brief moment to descend,  
Where these weak spirits round thee bend  
And parley with a thing like thee —  
What wouldst thou, Child of Clay! with  
me?

## THE SEVEN SPIRITS

Earth, ocean, air, night, mountains,  
winds, thy star,  
Are at thy beck and bidding, Child of  
Clay!  
Before thee at thy quest their spirits  
are —  
What wouldst thou with us, son of  
mortals — say?

*Man.* Forgetfulness —

*First Spirit.* Of what — of whom —  
and why?

*Man.* Of that which is within me;  
read it there —

Ye know it, and I cannot utter it.

*Spirit.* We can but give thee that  
which we possess:

Ask of us subjects, sovereignty, the power  
O'er earth — the whole, or portion — or a  
sign

Which shall control the elements, whereof  
We are the dominators, — each and all,  
These shall be thine.

*Man.* Oblivion, self-oblivion!

Can ye not wring from out the hidden  
realms

Ye offer so profusely what I ask?

*Spirit.* It is not in our essence, in our  
skill;

But — thou may'st die.

*Man.* Will death bestow it on me?

*Spirit.* We are immortal, and do not  
forget;

We are eternal; and to us the past

Is, as the future, present. Art thou  
answer'd?

*Man.* Ye mock me — but the power  
which brought ye here

Hath made you mine. Slaves, scoff not  
at my will!

The mind, the spirit, the Promethean  
spark,

The lightning of my being, is as bright,  
Pervading, and far darting as your own,  
And shall not yield to yours, though  
coop'd in clay!

Answer, or I will teach you what I am.

*Spirit.* We answer as we answer'd;  
our reply

Is even in thine own words.

*Man.* Why say ye so?

*Spirit.* If, as thou say'st, thine essence  
be as ours,

We have replied in telling thee, the thing

Mortals call death hath nought to do with us.

*Man.* I then have call'd ye from your realms in vain;

Ye cannot, or ye will not, aid me.

*Spirit.* Say,

What we possess we offer; it is thine:  
Bethink ere thou dismiss us; ask again;  
Kingdom, and sway, and strength, and length of days—

*Man.* Accurs'd! what have I to do with days?

They are too long already. — Hence — begone!

*Spirit.* Yet pause: being here, our will would do thee service;  
Bethink thee, is there then no other gift  
Which we can make not worthless in thine eyes?

*Man.* No, none: yet stay — one moment, ere we part,

I would behold ye face to face. I hear  
Your voices, sweet and melancholy sounds,

As music on the waters; and I see  
The steady aspect of a clear large star;  
But nothing more. Approach me as ye are,  
Or one, or all, in your accustom'd forms.

*Spirit.* We have no forms, beyond the elements

Of which we are the mind and principle:  
But choose a form — in that we will appear.

*Man.* I have no choice; there is no form on earth

Hideous or beautiful to me. Let him,  
Who is most powerful of ye, take such aspect

As unto him may seem most fitting —  
Come!

*Seventh Spirit (appearing in the shape of a beautiful female figure).* Behold!

*Man.* Oh God! if it be thus, and thou  
Art not a madness and a mockery,  
I yet might be most happy, I will clasp thee,

And we again will be —

[*The figure vanishes.*

My heart is crush'd!

[*MANFRED falls senseless.*

(*A voice is heard in the Incantation which follows.*)

When the moon is on the wave,  
And the glow-worm in the grass,  
And the meteor on the grave,  
And the wisp on the morass;

When the falling stars are shooting,  
And the answer'd owls are hooting,  
And the silent leaves are still  
In the shadow of the hill,  
Shall my soul be upon thine,  
With a power and with a sign.

Though thy slumber may be deep  
Yet thy spirit shall not sleep;  
There are shades which will not vanish,  
There are thoughts thou canst not banish;  
By a power to thee unknown,  
Thou canst never be alone;  
Thou art wrapt as with a shroud,  
Thou art gather'd in a cloud;  
And for ever shalt thou dwell  
In the spirit of this spell.

Though thou seest me not pass by,  
Thou shalt feel me with thine eye  
As a thing that, though unseen,  
Must be near thee, and hath been;  
And when in that secret dread  
Thou has turn'd around thy head,  
Thou shalt marvel I am not  
As thy shadow on the spot,  
And the power which thou dost feel  
Shall be what thou must conceal.

And a magic voice and verse  
Hath baptized thee with a curse;  
And a spirit of the air  
Hath begirt thee with a snare;  
In the wind there is a voice  
Shall forbid thee to rejoice;  
And to thee shall night deny  
All the quiet of her sky;  
And the day shall have a sun,  
Which shall make thee wish it done.

From thy false tears I did distil  
An essence which hath strength to kill;  
From thy own heart I then did wring  
The black blood in its blackest spring;  
From thy own smile I snatch'd the snake,  
For there it coil'd as in a brake;  
From thy own lip I drew the charm  
Which gave all these their chiefest harm;  
In proving every poison known,  
I found the strongest was thine own.

By thy cold breast and serpent smile,  
By thy unfathom'd gulfs of guile,  
By that most seeming virtuous eye,  
By thy shut soul's hypocrisy;

By the perfection of thine art  
Which pass'd for human thine own heart;  
By thy delight in others' pain,  
And by thy brotherhood of Cain,  
I call upon thee! and compel  
Thyself to be thy proper Hell!

And on thy head I pour the vial  
Which doth devote thee to this trial;  
Nor to slumber, nor to die,  
Shall be in thy destiny;  
Though thy death shall still seem near  
To thy wish, but as a fear;  
Lo! the spell now works around thee,  
And the clankless chain hath bound thee;  
O'er thy heart and brain together  
Hath the word been pass'd — now  
wither!

## SCENE II

*The Mountain of the Jungfrau. — Time,  
Morning. — MANFRED alone upon  
the Cliffs.*

*Man.* The spirits I have raised abandon me,  
The spells which I have studied baffle me,  
The remedy I reck'd of tortured me;  
I lean no more on superhuman aid;  
It hath no power upon the past, and for  
The future, till the past be gulf'd in  
darkness,  
It is not of my search. My mother  
Earth!  
And thou fresh breaking Day, and you,  
ye Mountains,  
Why are ye beautiful? I cannot love ye.  
And thou, the bright eye of the universe,  
That openest over all, and unto all  
Art a delight — thou shin'st not on my  
heart.  
And you, ye crags, upon whose extreme  
edge  
I stand, and on the torrent's brink be-  
neath  
Behold the tall pines dwindled as to  
shrubs  
In dizziness of distance; when a leap,  
A stir, a motion, even a breath, would  
bring  
My breast upon its rocky bosom's bed  
To rest for ever — wherefore do I pause?  
I feel the impulse — yet I do not plunge;  
I see the peril — yet do not recede;  
And my brain reels — and yet my foot is  
firm:

There is a power upon me which with-  
holds,  
And makes it my fatality to live, —  
If it be life to wear within myself  
This barrenness of spirit, and to be  
My own soul's sepulchre, for I have  
ceased

To justify my deeds unto myself —  
The last infirmity of evil. Ay,  
Thou winged and cloud-cleaving minister,  
[*An eagle passes.*

Whose happy flight is highest into heaven,  
Well may'st thou swoop so near me — I  
should be

Thy prey, and gorge thine eaglets; thou  
art gone

Where the eye cannot follow thee; but  
thine

Yet pierces downward, onward, or above,  
With a pervading vision. — Beautiful!  
How beautiful is all this visible world!  
How glorious in its action and itself!  
But we, who name ourselves its sover-  
eigns, we,

Half dust, half deity, alike unfit  
To sink or soar, with our mix'd essence  
make

A conflict of its elements, and breathe  
The breath of degradation and of pride,  
Contending with low wants and lofty will,  
Till our mortality predominates,  
And men are — what they name not to  
themselves,

And trust not to each other. Hark! the  
note, [The Shepherd's pipe in  
the distance is heard.

The natural music of the mountain  
reed —

For here the patriarchal days are not  
A pastoral fable — pipes in the liberal air,  
Mix'd with the sweet bells of the saun-  
tering herd;

My soul would drink those echoes. Oh,  
that I were

The viewless spirit of a lovely sound,  
A living voice, a breathing harmony,  
A bodiless enjoyment — born and dying  
With the blest tone which made me!

*Enter from below a CHAMOIS HUNTER.*

*Chamois Hunter.* Even so  
This way the chamois leapt: her nimble  
feet  
Have baffled me; my gains to-day will  
scarce

Repay my break-neck travail. — What is here?

Who seems not of my trade, and yet hath reach'd

A height which none even of our mountaineers,

Save our best hunters, may attain: his garb

Is goodly, his mien manly, and his air Proud as a free-born peasant's, at this distance:

I will approach him nearer.

*Man. (not perceiving the other).* To be thus —

Gray-hair'd with anguish, like these blasted pines,

Wrecks of a single winter, barkless, branchless,

A blighted trunk upon a cursed root, Which but supplies a feeling to decay —

And to be thus, eternally but thus, Having been otherwise! now furrow'd o'er

With wrinkles, plough'd by moments, — not by years, —

And hours, all tortured into ages — hours Which I outlive! — Ye toppling crags of ice!

Ye avalanches, whom a breath draws down

In mountainous o'erwhelming, come and crush me!

I hear ye momentarily above, beneath, Crash with a frequent conflict; but ye pass,

And only fall on things that still would live;

On the young flourishing forest, or the hut And hamlet of the harmless villager.

*C. Hun.* The mists begin to rise from up the valley;

I'll warn him to descend, or he may chance

To lose at once his way and life together.

*Man.* The mists boil up around the glaciers; clouds

Rise curling fast beneath me, white and sulphury,

Like foam from the roused ocean of deep Hell,

Whose every wave breaks on a living shore,

Heap'd with the damn'd like pebbles. — I am giddy.

*C. Hun.* I must approach him cautiously; if near,

A sudden step will startle him, and he Seems tottering already.

*Man.* Mountains have fallen, Leaving a gap in the clouds, and with the shock

Rocking their alpine brethren; filling up The ripe green valleys with destruction's splinters;

Damming the rivers with a sudden dash, Which crush'd the waters into mist and made

Their fountains find another channel — thus,

Thus, in its old age, did Mount Rosenberg —

Why stood I not beneath it?

*C. Hun.* Friend! have a care, Your next step may be fatal! — for the love

Of him who made you, stand not on that brink!

*Man. (not hearing him).* Such would have been for me a fitting tomb;

My bones had then been quiet in their depth;

They had not then been strewn upon the rocks

For the wind's pastime — as thus — thus they shall be —

In this one plunge. — Farewell, ye opening heavens!

Look not upon me thus reproachfully — You were not meant for me — Earth! take these atoms!

[As MANFRED is in act to spring from the cliff, the CHAMOIS HUNTER seizes and retains him with a sudden grasp.]

*C. Hun.* Hold, madman! — though weary of thy life,

Stain not our pure vales with thy guilty blood:

Away with me — I will not quit my hold.

*Man.* I am most sick at heart — nay, grasp me not —

I am all feebleness — mountains whirl Spinning around me — I grow blind — What art thou?

*C. Hun.* I'll answer that anon. Away with me —

The clouds grow thicker — there — now lean on me —

Place your foot here — here, take this staff, and cling

A moment to that shrub — now give me your hand,



And hold fast by my girdle — softly —  
well —

The Chalet will be gain'd within an hour :  
Come on, we'll quickly find a surer footing,  
And something like a pathway, which the  
torrent

Hath wash'd since winter. — Come, 'tis  
bravely done —

You should have been a hunter. — Follow  
me.

*[As they descend the rocks with  
difficulty, the scene closes.]*

## ACT II

### SCENE I. — *A Cottage amongst the Bernese Alps.*

MANFRED and the CHAMOIS HUNTER.

*C. Hun.* No, no — yet pause — thou  
must not yet go forth :

Thy mind and body are alike unfit  
To trust each other, for some hours, at  
least ;

When thou art better, I will be thy  
guide —

But whither ?

*Man.* It imports not : I do know  
My route full well, and need no further  
guidance

*C. Hun.* Thy garb and gait bespeak  
thee of high lineage —

One of the many chiefs, whose castled  
crags

Look o'er the lower valleys — which of  
these

May call thee lord ? I only know their  
portals ;

My way of life leads me but rarely down  
To bask by the huge hearths of those old  
halls,

Carousing with the vassals ; but the  
paths,

Which step from out our mountains to  
their doors,

I know from childhood — which of these  
is thine ?

*Man.* No matter.

*C. Hun.* Well, sir, pardon me the  
question,

And be of better cheer. Come, taste my  
wine ;

'Tis of an ancient vintage ; many a day  
'T has thaw'd my veins among our  
glaciers

Let it do thus for thine — Come, pledge  
me fairly.

*Man.* Away, away ! there's blood  
upon the brim !

Will it then never — never sink in the  
earth ?

*C. Hun.* What dost thou mean ? thy  
senses wander from thee.

*Man.* I say 'tis blood — my blood !  
the pure warm stream

Which ran in the veins of my fathers, and  
in ours

When we are in our youth, and had one  
heart,

And loved each other as we should not  
love,

And this was shed : but still it rises up,  
Coloring the clouds, that shut me out from  
heaven,

Where thou art not — and I shall never  
be.

*C. Hun.* Man of strange words, and  
some half-maddening sin,

Which makes thee people vacancy,  
whate'er

Thy dread and sufferance be, there's  
comfort yet —

The aid of holy men, and heavenly  
patience —

*Man.* Patience and patience ! Hence  
— that word was made

For brutes of burthen, not for birds of  
prey ;

Preach it to mortals of a dust like thine, —  
I am not of thine order.

*C. Hun.* Thanks to heaven !  
I would not be of thine for the free fame  
Of William Tell ; but whatsoe'er thine ill,  
It must be borne, and these wild starts  
are useless.

*Man.* Do I not bear it ? — Look on  
me — I live.

*C. Hun.* This is convulsion, and no  
healthful life.

*Man.* I tell thee, man ! I have lived  
many years,

Many long years, but they are nothing  
now

To those which I must number : ages —  
ages —

Space and eternity — and consciousness,  
With the fierce thirst of death — and still  
unslaked !

*C. Hun.* Why, on thy brow the seal of  
middle age

Hath scarce been set ; I am thine elder far.



*Man.* Think'st thou existence doth  
depend on time?  
It doth; but actions are our epochs:  
mine  
Have made my days and nights imperish-  
able,  
Endless, and all alike, as sands on the  
shore,  
Innumerable atoms; and one desert,  
Barren and cold, on which the wild waves  
break,  
But nothing rests, save carcasses and  
wrecks,  
Rocks and the salt-surf weeds of bitter-  
ness.

*C. Hun.* Alas! he's mad — but yet  
I must not leave him.

*Man.* I would I were — for then the  
things I see  
Would be but a distemper'd dream.

*C. Hun.* What is it  
That thou dost see, or think thou look'st  
upon?

*Man.* Myself, and thee — a peasant  
of the Alps —  
Thy humble virtues, hospitable home,  
And spirit patient, pious, proud, and  
free;  
Thy self-respect, grafted on innocent  
thoughts;  
The days of health, and nights of sleep;  
thy toils,  
By danger dignified, yet guiltless; hopes  
Of cheerful old age and a quiet grave,  
With cross and garland over its green  
turf,  
And thy grandchildren's love for epitaph;  
This do I see — and then I look within —  
It matters not — my soul was scorch'd  
already!

*C. Hun.* And wouldst thou then ex-  
change thy lot for mine?

*Man.* No, friend! I would not wrong  
thee, nor exchange  
My lot with living being: I can bear —  
However wretchedly, 'tis still to bear —  
In life what others could not brook to  
dream,  
But perish in their slumber.

*C. Hun.* And with this —  
This cautious feeling for another's pain,  
Canst thou be black with evil? — say not  
so.

Can one of gentle thoughts have wreak'd  
revenge  
Upon his enemies?

*Man.* Oh! no, no, no!  
My injuries came down on those who  
loved me —

On those whom I best loved: I never  
quelled

An enemy, save in my just defence —  
But my embrace was fatal.

*C. Hun.* Heaven give thee rest!  
And penitence restore thee to thyself;  
My prayers shall be for thee.

*Man.* I need them not —  
But can endure thy pity. I depart —  
'Tis time — farewell! — Here's gold, and  
thanks for thee —

No words — it is thy due. — Follow me  
not —

I know my path — the mountain peril's  
past:

And once again I charge thee, follow not!  
[Exit MANFRED.]

## SCENE II

*A lower Valley in the Alps. — A Cataract.*

*Enter MANFRED.*

It is not noon — the sunbow's rays still  
arch

The torrent with the many hues of  
heaven,  
And roll the sheeted silver's waving  
column

O'er the crag's headlong perpendicular,  
And fling its lines of foaming light along,  
And to and fro, like the pale courser's  
tail,

The Giant steed, to be bestrode by Death,  
As told in the Apocalypse. No eyes  
But mine now drink this sight of loveli-  
ness;

I should be sole in this sweet solitude,  
And with the Spirit of the place divide  
The homage of these waters. — I will call  
her.

[MANFRED takes some of the water into  
the palm of his hand, and flings it  
into the air, muttering the adjura-  
tion. After a pause, the WITCH OF  
THE ALPS rises beneath the arch of  
the sunbow of the torrent.]

Beautiful Spirit! with thy hair of light,  
And dazzling eyes of glory, in whose form  
The charms of earth's least mortal  
daughters grow

To an unearthly stature, in an essence

Of purer elements; while the hues of youth, —

Carnation'd like a sleeping infant's cheek,  
Rock'd by the beating of her mother's heart,

Or the rose tints, which summer's twilight leaves

Upon the lofty glacier's virgin snow,  
The blush of earth embracing with her heaven —

Tinge thy celestial aspect, and make tame

The beauties of the sunbow which bends o'er thee.

Beautiful Spirit! in thy calm clear brow,  
Wherein is glass'd serenity of soul,  
Which of itself shows immortality,  
I read that thou wilt pardon to a Son  
Of Earth, whom the abstruser powers permit

At times to commune with them — if that he

Avail him of his spells — to call thee thus,  
And gaze on thee a moment.

*Witch.* Son of Earth!

I know thee, and the powers which give thee power;

I know thee for a man of many thoughts,  
And deeds of good and ill, extreme in both,  
Fatal and fated in thy sufferings.

I have expected this — what wouldst thou with me?

*Man.* To look upon thy beauty — nothing further.

The face of the earth hath madden'd me, and I

Take refuge in her mysteries, and pierce  
To the abodes of those who govern her —  
But they can nothing aid me. I have sought

From them what they could not bestow, and now

I search no further.

*Witch.* What could be the quest  
Which is not in the power of the most powerful,

The rulers of the invisible?

*Man.* A boon;  
But why should I repeat it? 'twere in vain.

*Witch.* I know not that; let thy lips utter it.

*Man.* Well, though it torture me, 'tis but the same;  
My pang shall find a voice. From my youth upwards

My spirit walk'd not with the souls of men,

Nor look'd upon the earth with human eyes;

The thirst of their ambition was not mine,

The aim of their existence was not mine;  
My joys, my griefs, my passions, and my powers,

Made me a stranger; though I wore the form,

I had no sympathy with breathing flesh,  
Nor midst the creatures of clay that girded me

Was there but one who — but of her anon.  
I said with men, and with the thoughts of men,

I held but slight communion; but instead  
My joy was in the wilderness, — to breathe

The difficult air of the iced mountain's top,

Where the birds dare not build, nor insect's wing

Flit o'er the herbless granite; or to plunge

Into the torrent, and to roll along  
On the swift whirl of the new breaking wave

Of river-stream, of ocean, in their flow.  
In these my early strength exulted; or  
To follow through the night the moving moon,

The stars and their development; or catch

The dazzling lightnings till my eyes grew dim;

Or to look, list'ning, on the scattered leaves,

While Autumn winds were at their evening song.

These were my pastimes, and to be alone;  
For if the beings, of whom I was one, —  
Hating to be so, — cross'd me in my path,  
I felt myself degraded back to them,  
And was all clay again. And then I dived,

In my lone wanderings, to the caves of death,

Searching its cause in its effect; and drew

From wither'd bones, and skull, and heap'd up dust,

Conclusions most forbidden. Then I pass'd

The nights of years in sciences untaught

Save in the old time; and with time  
and toil,

And terrible ordeal, and such penance  
As in itself hath power upon the air,  
And spirits that do compass air and earth,  
Space, and the peopled infinite, I made  
Mine eyes familiar with Eternity,  
Such as, before me, did the Magi, and  
He who from out their fountain dwellings  
raised

Eros and Anteros, at Gadara,  
As I do thee; — and with my knowledge  
grew

The thirst of knowledge, and the power  
and joy

Of this most bright intelligence, until —  
*Witch.* Proceed.

*Man.* Oh! I but thus prolong'd my  
words,

Boasting these idle attributes, because  
As I approach the core of my heart's  
grief —

But to my task, I have not named to thee  
Father or mother, mistress, friend, or  
being,

With whom I wore the chain of human  
ties;

If I had such, they seem'd not such to me;  
Yet there was one —

*Witch.* Spare not thyself — proceed.

*Man.* She was like me in lineaments;  
her eyes,

Her hair, her features, all, to the very tone  
Even of her voice, they said were like to  
mine;

But soften'd all, and temper'd into  
beauty:

She had the same lone thoughts and  
wanderings,

The quest of hidden knowledge, and a  
mind

To comprehend the universe: nor these  
Alone, but with them gentler powers than  
mine,

Pity, and smiles, and tears — which I had  
not;

And tenderness — but that I had for her;  
Humility — and that I never had.

Her faults were mine — her virtues were  
her own —

I loved her, and destroy'd her!

*Witch.* With thy hand?

*Man.* Not with my hand, but heart,  
which broke her heart;

It gazed on mine, and wither'd. I have  
shed

Blood, but not hers — and yet her blood  
was shed;

I saw — and could not stanch it.

*Witch.* And for this —

A being of the race thou dost despise,  
The order, which thine own would rise

above,  
Mingling with us and ours, — thou dost  
forego

The gifts of our great knowledge, and  
shrink'st back

To recreant mortality — Away!

*Man.* Daughter of Air! I tell thee,  
since that hour —

But words are breath — look on me in my  
sleep,

Or watch my watchings — Come and sit  
by me!

My solitude is solitude no more,  
But peopled with the Furies; — I have  
gnash'd

My teeth in darkness till returning morn,  
Then cursed myself till sunset; — I have  
pray'd

For madness as a blessing — 'tis denied  
me.

I have affronted death — but in the war  
Of elements the waters shrunk from me,  
And fatal things pass'd harmless; the  
cold hand

Of an all-pitiless demon held me back,  
Back by a single hair, which would not  
break

In fantasy, imagination, all

The affluence of my soul — which one  
day was

A Cræsus in creation — I plunged deep  
But, like an ebbing wave, it dash'd me  
back

Into the gulf of my unfathom'd thought.  
I plunged amidst mankind — Forgetful-  
ness

I sought in all, save where 'tis to be found,  
And that I have to learn; my sciences,  
My long-pursued and superhuman art,  
Is mortal here: I dwell in my despair —  
And live — and live for ever.

*Witch.* It may be

That I can aid thee.

*Man.* To do this thy power  
Must wake the dead, or lay me low with  
them.

Do so — in any shape — in any hour —  
With any torture — so it be the last.

*Witch.* That is not in my province;  
but if thou

Wilt swear obedience to my will, and do  
My bidding, it may help thee to thy  
wishes.

*Man.* I will not swear — Obey! and  
whom? the spirits

Whose presence I command, and be the  
slave

Of those who served me — Never!

*Witch.* Is this all?

Hast thou no gentler answer? — Yet  
bethink thee,

And pause ere thou rejectest.

*Man.* I have said it.

*Witch.* Enough! I may retire then —  
say!

*Man.* Retire!

[*The WITCH disappears.*]

*Man. (alone).* We are the fools of  
time and terror: Days

Steal on us, and steal from us; yet we  
live,

Loathing our life, and dreading still to  
die.

In all the days of this detested yoke —  
This vital weight upon the struggling  
heart,

Which sinks with sorrow, or beats quick  
with pain,

Or joy that ends in agony or faintness —

In all the days of past and future, for

In life there is no present, we can number

How few — how less than few — wherein  
the soul

Forbears to pant for death, and yet draws  
back

As from a stream in winter, though the  
chill

Be but a moment's. I have one resource

Still in my science — I can call the dead,

And ask them what it is we dread to be;

The sternest answer can but be the Grave.

And that is nothing. If they answer  
not —

The buried Prophet answered to the Hag  
Of Endor; and the Spartan Monarch drew

From the Byzantine maid's unsleeping  
spirit

An answer and his destiny — he slew

That which he loved, unknowing what  
he slew,

And died unpardon'd — though he call'd  
in aid

The Phyxian Jove, and in Phigalia roused

The Arcadian Evocators to compel

The indignant shadow to depose her  
wrath,

Or fix her term of vengeance — she re-  
plied

In words of dubious import, but fulfill'd.

If I had never lived, that which I love

Had still been living; had I never loved,

That which I love would still be beautiful,

Happy and giving happiness. What is  
she?

What is she now? — a sufferer for my  
sins —

A thing I dare not think upon — or noth-  
ing.

Within few hours I shall not call in vain —

Yet in this hour I dread the thing I dare:

Until this hour I never shrunk to gaze

On spirit, good or evil — now I tremble,

And feel a strange cold thaw upon my  
heart.

But I can act even what I most abhor,

And champion human fears. — The night  
approaches. [*Exit.*]

### SCENE III

*The Summit of the Jungfrau Mountain.*

*Enter FIRST DESTINY.*

The moon is rising broad, and round, and  
bright;

And here on snows, where never human  
foot

Of common mortal trod, we nightly  
tread,

And leave no traces: o'er the savage sea,  
The glassy ocean of the mountain ice,

We skim its rugged breakers, which put  
on

The aspect of a tumbling tempest's foam,  
Frozen in a moment — a dead whirlpool's

image:

And this most steep fantastic pinnacle,

The fretwork of some earthquake —  
where the clouds

Pause to repose themselves in passing  
by —

Is sacred to our revels, or our vigils;

Here do I wait my sisters, on our way

To the Hall of Arimanes, for to-night

Is our great festival — 't is strange they  
come not.

*A Voice without, singing.*

The Captive Usurper,

Hurl'd down from the throne,

Lay buried in torpor,

Forgotten and lone;

I broke through his slumbers,  
 I shiver'd his chain,  
 I leagu'd him with numbers —  
 He's Tyrant again!  
 With the blood of a million he'll answer  
 my care,  
 With a nation's destruction — his flight  
 and despair.

*Second Voice, without.*

The ship sail'd on, the ship sail'd fast,  
 But I left not a sail, and I left not a mast;  
 There is not a plank of the hull or the  
 deck,  
 And there is not a wretch to lament o'er  
 his wreck;  
 Save one, whom I held, as he swam, by  
 the hair,  
 And he was a subject well worthy my  
 care;  
 A traitor on land, and a pirate at sea, —  
 But I saved him to wreak further havoc  
 for me!

*FIRST DESTINY, answering.*

The city lies sleeping;  
 The morn, to deplore it,  
 May dawn on it weeping:  
 Sullenly, slowly,  
 The black plague flew o'er it —  
 Thousands lie lowly;  
 Tens of thousands shall perish;  
 The living shall fly from  
 The sick they should cherish;  
 But nothing can vanquish  
 The touch that they die from.  
 Sorrow and anguish,  
 And evil and dread,  
 Envelop a nation;  
 The blest are the dead,  
 Who see not the sight  
 Of their own desolation;  
 This work of a night —  
 This wreck of a realm — this deed of my  
 doing —  
 For ages I've done, and shall still be re-  
 newing!

*Enter the SECOND and THIRD DESTINIES.*

*The Three*

Our hands contain the hearts of men,  
 Our footsteps are their graves;  
 We only give to take again  
 The spirits of our slaves!

*First Des.* Welcome! — Where's Nem-  
 esis?

*Second Des.* At some great work;  
 But what I know not, for my hands were  
 full.

*Third Des.* Behold she cometh.

*Enter NEMESIS.*

*First Des.* Say, where hast thou been?  
 My sisters and thyself are slow to-night.

*Nem.* I was detain'd repairing  
 shatter'd thrones,  
 Marrying fools, restoring dynasties,  
 Avenging men upon their enemies,  
 And making them repent their own re-  
 venge;  
 Goaded the wise to madness; from the  
 dull

Shaping out oracles to rule the world  
 Afresh, for they were waxing out of date,  
 And mortals dared to ponder for them-  
 selves,  
 To weigh kings in the balance, and to  
 speak

Of freedom, the forbidden fruit. — Away!  
 We have outstay'd the hour — mount we  
 our clouds! [*Exeunt.*]

#### SCENE IV

*The Hall of Arimanes — Arimanes on his  
 Throne, a Globe of Fire, surrounded  
 by the Spirits.*

*Hymn of the SPIRITS*

Hail to our Master! — Prince of Earth  
 and Air!

Who walks the clouds and waters — in  
 his hand  
 The sceptre of the elements, which tear  
 Themselves to chaos at his high com-  
 mand!

He breatheth — and a tempest shakes  
 the sea;

He speaketh — and the clouds reply in  
 thunder;

He gazeth — from his glance the sun-  
 beams flee;

He moveth — earthquakes rend the  
 world asunder.

Beneath his footsteps the volcanoes rise;  
 His shadow in the Pestilence; his path  
 The comets herald through the crackling  
 skies;

And planets turn to ashes at his wrath.





*Man.* Thou canst not reply to me.  
Call up the dead — my question is for them.

*Nem.* Great Arimanes, doth thy will  
avouch

The wishes of this mortal?

*Ari.* Yea.

*Nem.* Whom wouldst thou  
Uncharnel?

*Man.* One without a tomb — call up  
Astarte.

## NEMESIS

Shadow! or Spirit!

Whatever thou art,

Which still doth inherit

The whole or a part

Of the form of thy birth,

Of the mould of thy clay,

Which return'd to the earth.

Re-appear to the day!

Bear what thou borest,

The heart and the form,

And the aspect thou worst

Redeem from the worm.

Appear! — Appear! — Appear!

Who sent thee there requires thee here!

[*The Phantom of ASTARTE rises  
and stands in the midst.*]

*Man.* Can this be death? there's  
bloom upon her cheek;

But now I see it is no living hue,

But a strange hectic — like the unnatural  
red

Which Autumn plants upon the perish'd  
leaf.

It is the same! Oh, God! that I should  
dread

To look upon the same — Astarte! — No.

I cannot speak to her — but bid her  
speak —

Forgive me or condemn me.

## NEMESIS

By the power which hath broken

The grave which enthrall'd thee,

Speak to him who hath spoken,

Or those who have call'd thee!

*Man.* She is silent,  
And in that silence I am more than an-  
swer'd.

*Nem.* My power extends no further,  
Prince of Air!

It rests with thee alone — command her  
voice.

*Ari.* Spirit — obey this sceptre!

*Nem.* Silent still!

She is not of our order, but belongs

To the other powers. Mortal! thy quest  
is vain,

And we are baffled also.

*Man.* Hear me, hear me —

Astarte! my beloved! speak to me:

I have so much endured — so much  
endure —

Look on me! the grave hath not changed  
thee more

Than I am changed for thee. Thou  
lovedst me

Too much, as I loved thee: we were not  
made

To torture thus each other, though it  
were

The deadliest sin to love as we have  
loved.

Say that thou loath'st me not — that I do  
bear

This punishment for both — that thou  
wilt be

One of the blessed — and that I shall die;

For hitherto all hateful things conspire  
To bind me in existence — in a life

Which makes me shrink from immor-  
tality —

A future like the past. I cannot rest.

I know not what I ask, nor what I seek;

I feel but what thou art, and what I am;

And I would hear yet once before I perish

The voice which was my music — Speak  
to me!

For I have call'd on thee in the still night,  
Startled the slumbering birds from the

hush'd boughs,  
And woke the mountain wolves, and made  
the caves

Acquainted with thy vainly echoed name,  
Which answer'd me — many things an-  
swer'd me —

Spirits and men — but thou wert silent  
all.

Yet speak to me! I have outwatch'd  
the stars,

And gazed o'er heaven in vain search of  
thee.

Speak to me! I have wander'd o'er the  
earth,

And never found thy likeness — Speak to  
me!

Look on the fiends around — they feel for  
me:

I fear them not, and feel for thee alone —

Speak to me! though it be in wrath;—  
but say—  
I reck not what—but let me hear thee  
once—

This once—once more!

*Phantom of Astarte.* Manfred.

*Man.* Say on, say on—  
I live but in the sound—it is thy voice!

*Phan.* Manfred! To-morrow ends  
thine earthly ills.

Farewell!

*Man.* Yet one word more—am I for-  
given?

*Phan.* Farewell!

*Man.* Say, shall we meet again?

*Phan.* Farewell!

*Man.* One word for mercy! Say,  
thou lovest me.

*Phan.* Manfred!

*The Spirit of ASTARTE disappears.*

*Nem.* She's gone, and will not be  
recall'd;

Her words will be fulfill'd. Return to the  
earth.

*A Spirit.* He is convulsed.—This is  
to be a mortal

And seek the things beyond mortality.

*Another Spirit.* Yet, see, he mastereth  
himself, and makes

His torture tributary to his will.

Had he been one of us, he would have  
made

An awful spirit.

*Nem.* Hast thou further question  
Of our great sovereign, or his worship-  
pers?

*Man.* None.

*Nem.* Then for a time farewell.

*Man.* We meet then! where? On  
the earth?—

Even as thou wilt: and for the grace ac-  
corded

I now depart a debtor. Fare ye well!

[*Exit* MANFRED.]

(*Scene closes.*)

### ACT III

SCENE I.—*A Hall in the Castle of Manfred.*

MANFRED and HERMAN.

*Man.* What is the hour?

*Her.* It wants but one till sunset,  
And promises a lovely twilight.

*Man.* Say,  
Are all things so disposed of in the tower  
As I directed?

*Her.* All, my lord, are ready:  
Here is the key and casket.

*Man.* It is well:  
Thou may'st retire. [*Exit* HERMAN.]

*Man. (alone).* There is a calm upon  
me—

Inexplicable stillness! which till now  
Did not belong to what I knew of life.

If that I did not know philosophy  
To be of all our vanities the motliest,  
The merest word that ever fool'd the ear  
From out the schoolman's jargon, I  
should deem

The golden secret, the sought "Kalon,"  
found,

And seated in my soul. It will not last,  
But it is well to have known it, though  
but once:

It hath enlarged my thoughts with a new  
sense,

And I within my tablets would note down  
That there is such a feeling. Who is  
there?

*Re-enter* HERMAN.

*Her.* My lord, the abbot of St. Mau-  
rice craves  
To greet your presence.

*Enter the* ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE.

*Abbot.* Peace be with Count Manfred!

*Man.* Thanks, holy father! welcome  
to these walls;

Thy presence honors them, and blesseth  
those

Who dwell within them.

*Abbot.* Would it were so, Count!—  
But I would fain confer with thee alone.

*Man.* Herman, retire.—What would  
my reverend guest?

*Abbot.* Thus, without prelude:—Age  
and zeal, my office,  
And good intent, must plead my privi-  
lege;

Our near, though not acquainted neigh-  
borhood,

May also be my herald. Rumors strange  
And of unholy nature, are abroad,

And busy with thy name; a noble name  
For centuries: may he who bears it now  
Transmit it unimpaired!

*Man.* Proceed,—I listen.

*Abbot.* 'Tis said thou holdest converse  
with the things

Which are forbidden to the search of  
man;

That with the dwellers of the dark abodes,  
The many evil and unheavenly spirits

Which walk the valley of the shade of  
death,

Thou communest. I know that with  
mankind,

Thy fellows in creation, thou dost rarely  
Exchange thy thoughts, and that thy  
solitude

Is as an anchorite's, were it but holy.

*Man.* And what are they who do  
avouch these things?

*Abbot.* My pious brethren — the  
scared peasantry —

Even thy own vassals — who do look on  
thee

With most unquiet eyes. Thy life's in  
peril.

*Man.* Take it.

*Abbot.* I come to save, and not destroy:  
I would not pry into thy secret soul;

But if these things be sooth, there still is  
time

For penitence and pity: reconcile thee  
With the true church, and through the  
church to heaven.

*Man.* I hear thee. This is my reply:  
whate'er

I may have been, or am, doth rest be-  
tween

Heaven and myself. I shall not choose  
a mortal

To be my mediator. Have I sinn'd  
Against your ordinances? prove and  
punish!

*Abbot.* My son! I did not speak of  
punishment,

But penitence and pardon; — with my-  
self

The choice of such remains — and for the  
last,

Our institutions and our strong belief  
Have given me power to smooth the path  
from sin

To higher hope and better thoughts; the  
first

I leave to heaven, — "Vengeance is mine  
alone!"

So saith the Lord, and with all humbleness  
His servant echoes back the awful word.

*Man.* Old man! there is no power in  
holy men,

Nor charm in prayer, nor purifying form  
Of penitence, nor outward look, nor fast,  
Nor agony — nor, greater than all these,  
The innate tortures of that deep despair,  
Which is remorse without the fear of  
hell,

But all in all sufficient to itself  
Would make a hell of heaven — can  
exorcise

From out the unbound spirit the quick  
sense

Of its own sins, wrongs, sufferance, and  
revenge

Upon itself; there is no future pang  
Can deal that justice on the self-con-  
demn'd

He deals on his own soul.

*Abbot.* All this is well;  
For this will pass away, and be succeeded  
By an auspicious hope, which shall look  
up

With calm assurance to that blessed  
place,

Which all who seek may win, whatever  
be

Their earthly errors, so they be atoned:  
And the commencement of atonement is

The sense of its necessity. Say on —  
And all our church can teach thee shall

be taught;  
And all we can absolve thee shall be  
pardon'd.

*Man.* When Rome's sixth emperor  
was near his last,

The victim of a self-inflicted wound,  
To shun the torments of a public death

From senates once his slaves, a certain  
soldier,

With show of loyal pity, would have  
stanch'd

The gushing throat with his officious robe;  
The dying Roman thrust him back, and

said —  
Some empire still in his expiring glance —

"It is too late — is this fidelity?"

*Abbot.* And what of this?

*Man.* I answer with the Roman —  
"It is too late!"

*Abbot.* It never can be so,  
To reconcile thyself with thy own soul,  
And thy own soul with heaven. Hast  
thou no hope?

'Tis strange — even those who do despair  
above,

Yet shape themselves some fantasy on  
earth,

To which frail twig they cling, like drown-  
ing men.

*Man.* Ay — father! I have had those  
earthly visions,

And noble aspirations in my youth,  
To make my own the mind of other  
men,

The enlightener of nations; and to rise  
I knew not whither — it might be to  
fall;

But fall, even as the mountain-cataract,  
Which having leapt from its more daz-  
zling height,

Even in the foaming strength of its  
abyss,

(Which casts up misty columns that be-  
come

Clouds raining from the re-ascended  
skies,)

Lies low but mighty still. — But this is  
past,

My thoughts mistook themselves.

*Abbot.* And wherefore so?

*Man.* I could not tame my nature  
down; for he

Must serve who fain would sway; and  
soothe, and sue,

And watch all time, and pry into all  
place,

And be a living lie, who would become  
A mighty thing amongst the mean, and  
such

The mass are; I disdain'd to mingle  
with

A herd, though to be leader — and of  
wolves.

The lion is alone, and so am I.

*Abbot.* And why not live and act with  
other men?

*Man.* Because my nature was averse  
from life;

And yet not cruel; for I would not make,  
But find a desolation. Like the wind,  
The red-hot breath of the most lone  
simoom,

Which dwells but in the desert, and  
sweeps o'er

The barren sands which bear no shrubs to  
blast,

And revels o'er their wild and arid waves,  
And seeketh not, so that it is not sought,  
But being met is deadly, — such hath  
been

The course of my existence; but there  
came

Things in my path which are no more.

*Abbot.*

I 'gin to fear that thou art past all aid  
From me and from my calling; yet so  
young,

I still would —

*Man.* Look on me! there is an order  
Of mortals on the earth, who do become  
Old in their youth, and die ere middle  
age,

Without the violence of warlike death;  
Some perishing of pleasure, some of study,  
Some worn with toil, some of mere wear-  
iness,

Some of disease, and some insanity,  
And some of wither'd or of broken hearts;

For this last is a malady which slays  
More than are number'd in the lists of  
Fate,

Taking all shapes, and bearing many  
names.

Look upon me! for even of all these  
things

Have I partaken; and of all these things,  
One were enough; then wonder not that I  
Am what I am, but that I ever was,  
Or having been, that I am still on earth.

*Abbot.* Yet, hear me still —

*Man.* Old man! I do respect  
Thine order, and revere thine years; I  
deem

Thy purpose pious, but it is in vain:  
Think me not churlish; I would spare  
thyself,

Far more than me, in shunning at this  
time

All further colloquy — and so — farewell.  
[Exit MANFRED.]

*Abbot.* This should have been a noble  
creature; he

Hath all the energy which would have  
made

A goodly frame of glorious elements,  
Had they been wisely mingled; as it is,  
It is an awful chaos — light and darkness,  
And mind and dust, and passions and  
pure thoughts

Mix'd, and contending without end or  
order, —

All dormant or destructive: he will  
perish,

And yet he must not; I will try once more  
For such are worth redemption; and my  
duty

Is to dare all things for a righteous end.  
I'll follow him — but cautiously, though  
surely. [Exit ABBOT.]



## SCENE II

*Another Chamber.*

MANFRED and HERMAN.

*Her.* My lord, you bade me wait on  
you at sunset:

He sinks behind the mountain.

*Man.* Doth he so?

I will look on him. (*MANFRED advances  
to the Window of the Hall.*)

Glorious Orb! the idol

Of early nature, and the vigorous race  
Of undiseased mankind, the giant sons  
Of the embrace of angels, with a sex  
More beautiful than they, which did  
draw down

The erring spirits who can ne'er return. —  
Most glorious orb! that wert a worship,  
ere

The mystery of thy making was reveal'd!  
Thou earliest minister of the Almighty,  
Which gladden'd, on their mountain tops,  
the hearts

Of the Chaldean shepherds, till they  
pour'd

Themselves in orisons! Thou material  
God!

And representative of the unknown —  
Who chose thee for his shadow! Thou  
chief star!

Centre of many stars! which mak'st  
our earth

Endurable, and temperest the hues  
And hearts of all who walk within thy  
rays!

Sire of the seasons! Monarch of the  
climes!

And those who dwell in them! for near  
or far,

Our inborn spirits have a tint of thee  
Even as our outward aspects; — thou  
dost rise.

And shine, and set in glory. Fare thee  
well!

I ne'er shall see thee more. As my first  
glance

Of love and wonder was for thee, then  
take

My latest look: thou wilt not beam on  
one

To whom the gifts of life and warmth  
have been

Of a more fatal nature. He is gone:  
I follow. [*Exit MANFRED.*]

## SCENE III

*The Mountains — The Castle of Manfred  
at some distance — A Terrace be-  
fore a Tower — Time, Twilight.*

HERMAN, MANUEL and other Dependents  
of MANFRED.

*Her.* 'Tis strange enough; night after  
night, for years,  
He hath pursued long vigils in this tower  
Without a witness. I have been within  
it, —

So have we all been oft-times; but from it,  
Or its contents, it were impossible  
To draw conclusions absolute, or aught  
His studies tend to. To be sure, there is  
One chamber where none enter: I would  
give

The fee of what I have to come these three  
years,

To pore upon its mysteries.

*Manuel.* 'Twere dangerous:  
Content thyself with what thou know'st  
already.

*Her.* Ah! Manuel! thou art elderly  
and wise,  
And couldst say much; thou hast dwelt,  
within the castle —

How many years is't?

*Manuel.* Ere Count Manfred's birth,  
I served his father, whom he nought re-  
sembles.

*Her.* There be more sons in like pre-  
dicament.

But wherein do they differ?

*Manuel.* I speak not  
Of features or of form, but mind and  
habits;  
Count Sigismund was proud, but gay and  
free, —

A warrior and a reveller; he dwelt not  
With books and solitude, nor made the  
night

A gloomy vigil, but a festal time,  
Merrier than day; he did not walk the  
rocks

And forests like a wolf, nor turn aside  
From men and their delights.

*Her.* Beshrew the hour,  
But those were jocund times! I would  
that such

Would visit the old walls again; they  
look

As if they had forgotten them.

*Manuel.* These walls  
Must change their chieftain first. Oh!

I have seen  
Some strange things in them, Herman.

*Her.* Come, be friendly;  
Relate me some to while away our watch:  
I've heard thee darkly speak of an event  
Which happen'd hereabouts, by this  
same tower.

*Manuel.* That was a night indeed! I  
do remember  
'Twas twilight, as it may be now, and  
such

Another evening; — yon red cloud, which  
rests

On Eigher's pinnacle, so rested then, —  
So like that it might be the same; the  
wind

Was faint and gusty, and the mountain  
snows

Began to glitter with the climbing moon;  
Count Manfred was, as now, within his  
tower, —

How occupied, we knew not, but with  
him

The sole companion of his wanderings  
And watchings — her, whom of all earthly  
things

That lived, the only thing he seem'd to  
love, —

As he, indeed, by blood was bound to do  
The lady Astarte, his —

Hush! who comes here?

*Enter the ABBOT.*

*Abbot.* Where is your master?

*Her.* Yonder in the tower.

*Abbot.* I must speak with him.

*Manuel.* 'Tis impossible;  
He is most private, and must not be thus  
Intruded on.

*Abbot.* Upon myself I take  
The forfeit of my fault, if fault there be —  
But I must see him.

*Her.* Thou hast seen him once  
This eve already.

*Abbot.* Herman! I command thee,  
Knock, and apprise the Count of my ap-  
proach.

*Her.* We dare not.

*Abbot.* Then it seems I must be herald  
Of my own purpose.

*Manuel.* Reverend father, stop —  
I pray you pause.

*Abbot.* Why so?

*Manuel.* But step this way,  
And I will tell you further. [*Exeunt.*]

#### SCENE IV

*Interior of the Tower.*

*MANFRED alone.*

The stars are forth, the moon above the  
tops

Of the snow-shining mountains. — Beau-  
tiful!

I linger yet with Nature, for the Night  
Hath been to me a more familiar face  
Than that of man; and in her starry  
shade

Of dim and solitary loveliness,  
I learn'd the language of another world.  
I do remember me, that in my youth,  
When I was wandering, — upon such a  
night

I stood within the Coliseum's wall,  
'Midst the chief relics of almighty Rome;  
The trees which grew along the broken  
arches

Waved dark in the blue midnight, and the  
stars

Shone through the rents of ruin; from afar  
The watch-dog bay'd beyond the Tiber:  
and

More near from out the Cæsars' palace  
came

The owl's long cry, and, interruptedly,  
Of distant sentinels the fitful song  
Begun and died upon the gentle wind.  
Some cypresses beyond the time-worn  
breach

Appear'd to skirt the horizon, yet they  
stood

Within a bowshot. Where the Cæsars  
dwelt,

And dwell the tuneless birds of night,  
amidst

A grove which springs through level'd  
battlements,

And twines its roots with the imperial  
hearths,

Ivy usurps the laurel's place of growth;  
But the gladiators' bloody Circus stands,

A noble wreck in ruinous perfection,  
While Cæsar's chambers, and the Au-  
gustan halls,

Grovel on earth in indistinct decay.  
And thou didst shine, thou rolling moon,

upon

All this, and cast a wide and tender light,  
Which soften'd down the hoar austerity  
Of rugged desolation, and fill'd up,  
As 'twere anew, the gaps of centuries;  
Leaving that beautiful which still was so,  
And making that which was not, till the  
place

Became religion, and the heart ran o'er  
With silent worship of the great of old, —  
The dead but sceptred sovereigns, who  
still rule

Our spirits from their urns.

'Twas such a night!  
'Tis strange that I recall it at this time;  
But I have found our thoughts take wild-  
est flight

Even at the moment when they should  
array

Themselves in pensive order.

*Enter the ABBOT.*

*Abbot.* My good lord!  
I crave a second grace for this approach;  
But yet let not my humble zeal offend  
By its abruptness — all it hath of ill  
Recoils on me; its good in the effect  
May light upon your head — could I say  
*heart* —

Could I touch *that*, with words or prayers,  
I should

Recall a noble spirit which hath wan-  
der'd;

But is not yet all lost.

*Man.* Thou know'st me not;  
My days are number'd, and my deeds  
recorded:

Retire, or 'twill be dangerous — Away!  
*Abbot.* Thou dost not mean to menace  
me?

*Man.* Not I;  
I simply tell thee peril is at hand,  
And would preserve thee.

*Abbot.* What dost thou mean?

*Man.* Look there!  
What dost thou see?

*Abbot.* Nothing.

*Man.* Look there I say.  
And steadfastly; — now tell me what  
thou seest?

*Abbot.* That which should shake me,  
but I fear it not:

I see a dusk and awful figure rise,  
Like an infernal god, from out the earth;  
His face wrapt in a mantle, and his  
form

Robed as with angry clouds: he stands  
between

Thyself and me — but I do fear him not.

*Man.* Thou hast no cause — he shall  
not harm thee — but

His sight may shock thine old limbs into  
palsy.

I say to thee — Retire!

*Abbot.* And I reply —  
Never — till I have battled with this  
fiend: —

What doth he here?

*Man.* Why — ay — what doth he  
here?

I did not send for him, — he is unbidden.

*Abbot.* Alas! lost mortal! what with  
guests like these

Hast thou to do? I tremble for thy sake:  
Why doth he gaze on thee, and thou on  
him?

Ah! he unveils his aspect: on his brow  
The thunder-scars are graven: from his  
eye

Glares forth the immortality of hell —  
Avaunt! —

*Man.* Pronounce — what is thy mis-  
sion?

*Spirit.* Come! —

*Abbot.* What art thou, unknown be-  
ing? answer! — speak!

*Spirit.* The genius of this mortal. —  
Come! 'tis time.

*Man.* I am prepared for all things, but  
deny

The power which summons me. Who  
sent thee here?

*Spirit.* Thou'lt know anon — Come!  
Come!

*Man.* I have commanded  
Things of an essence greater far than thine,  
And striven with thy masters. Get thee  
hence!

*Spirit.* Mortal! thine hour is come —  
Away! I say.

*Man.* I knew, and know my hour is  
come, but not

To render up my soul to such as thee:  
Away! I'll die as I have lived — alone.

*Spirit.* Then I must summon up my  
brethren. — Rise!

[*Other Spirits rise up.*

*Abbot.* Avaunt! ye evil ones! —  
Avaunt! I say;

Ye have no power where piety hath  
power,

And I do charge ye in the name —

*Spirit.* Old man!  
We know ourselves, our mission, and  
thine order;  
Waste not thy holy words on idle uses,  
It were in vain: this man is forfeited.  
Once more I summon him—Away!  
Away!

*Man.* I do defy ye,—though I feel  
my soul  
Is ebbing from me, yet I do defy ye;  
Nor will I hence, while I have earthly  
breath  
To breathe my scorn upon ye—earthly  
strength  
To wrestle, though with spirits; what  
ye take  
Shall be ta'en limb by limb.

*Spirit.* Reluctant mortal!  
Is this the Magian who would so pervade  
The world invisible, and make himself  
Almost our equal? Can it be that thou  
Art thus in love with life? the very  
life  
Which made thee wretched!

*Man.* Thou false fiend, thou liest!  
My life is in its last hour,—*that* I know,  
Nor would redeem a moment of that  
hour;  
I do not combat against death, but thee  
And thy surrounding angels; my past  
power  
Was purchased by no compact with thy  
crew,  
But by superior science—penance, dar-  
ing,  
And length of watching, strength of mind,  
and skill  
In knowledge of our fathers—when the  
earth  
Saw men and spirits walking side by  
side,  
And gave ye no supremacy: I stand  
Upon my strength—I do defy—deny—  
Spurn back, and scorn ye!—

*Spirit.* But thy many crimes  
Have made thee—

*Man.* What are they to such as thee?  
Must crimes be punish'd but by other  
crimes,

And greater criminals?—Back to thy  
hell!

Thou hast no power upon me, *that* I  
feel;

Thou never shalt possess me, *that* I  
know:

What I have done is done; I bear within

A torture which could nothing gain from  
thine:

The mind which is immortal makes itself  
Requital for its good or evil thoughts,—  
Is its own origin of ill and end

And its own place and time: its innate  
sense,

When stripp'd of this mortality, derives  
No color from the fleeting things without,  
But is absorb'd in sufferance or in joy,  
Born from the knowledge of its own  
desert.

*Thou* didst not tempt me, and thou  
couldst not tempt me;

I have not been thy dupe, nor am thy  
prey—

But was my own destroyer and will be  
My own hereafter.—Back, ye baffled  
fiends!—

The hand of death is on me—but not  
yours! [*The Demons disappear.*]

*Abbot.* Alas! how pale thou art—thy  
lips are white—

And thy breast heaves—and in thy gasp-  
ing throat

The accents rattle: Give thy prayers to  
heaven—

Pray—albeit but in thought,—but die  
not thus.

*Man.* 'Tis over—my dull eyes can  
fix thee not;

But all things swim around me, and the  
earth

Heaves as it were beneath me. Fare  
thee well!

Give me thy hand.

*Abbot.* Cold—cold—even to the  
heart—

But yet one prayer—Alas! how fares it  
with thee?

*Man.* Old man! 't is not so difficult  
to die. [*MANFRED expires.*]

*Abbot.* He's gone—his soul hath  
ta'en its earthless flight;

Whither? I dread to think—but he is  
gone:

*September, 1816—May, 1817.*

June 16, 1817.

## TO THOMAS MOORE

My boat is on the shore,  
And my bark is on the sea;  
But, before I go, Tom Moore,  
Here's a double health to thee!



Here's a sigh to those who love me,  
And a smile to those who hate;  
And, whatever sky's above me,  
Here's a heart for every fate.

Though the ocean roar around me,  
Yet it still shall bear me on;  
Though a desert should surround me,  
It hath springs that may be won.

Were't the last drop in the well,  
As I gasp'd upon the brink,  
Ere my fainting spirit fell,  
'Tis to thee that I would drink.

With that water, as this wine,  
The libation I would pour  
Should be — peace with thine and mine,  
And a health to thee, Tom Moore.  
*July, 1817. 1821.*

## CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIM- MAGE

### FROM CANTO IV

I stood in Venice, on the Bridge [St. 1  
of Sighs;  
A palace and a prison on each hand:  
I saw from out the wave her structures rise  
As from the stroke of the enchanter's  
wand:  
A thousand years their cloudy wings  
expand  
Around me, and a dying Glory smiles  
O'er the far times, when many a subject  
land  
Look'd to the winged Lion's marble piles,  
Where Venice sate in state, throned on  
her hundred isles!

She looks a sea Cybele, fresh from ocean,  
Rising with her tiara of proud towers  
At airy distance, with majestic motion,  
A ruler of the waters and their powers;  
And such she was; — her daughters had  
their dowers  
From spoils of nations, and the exhaust-  
less East  
Pour'd in her lap all gems in sparkling  
showers.  
In purple was she robed, and of her feast  
Monarchs partook, and deem'd their  
dignity increased.

In Venice Tasso's echoes are no more,  
And silent rows the songless gondolier;

Her palaces are crumbling to the shore,  
And music meets not always now the ear:  
Those days are gone — but Beauty still is  
here.

States fall, arts fade — but Nature doth  
not die,  
Nor yet forget how Venice once was dear,  
The pleasant place of all festivity,  
The revel of the earth, the masque of  
Italy!

But unto us she hath a spell beyond  
Her name in story, and her long array  
Of mighty shadows, whose dim forms  
despond

Above the dogeless city's vanish'd sway;  
Ours is a trophy which will not decay  
With the Rialto; Shylock and the Moor,  
And Pierre, cannot be swept or worn  
away —

The keystones of the arch! though all  
were o'er,  
For us repeopled were the solitary shore.

The beings of the mind are not of clay;  
Essentially immortal, they create  
And multiply in us a brighter ray  
And more beloved existence: that which  
Fate

Prohibits to dull life, in this our state  
Of mortal bondage, by these spirits sup-  
plied,  
First exiles, then replaces what we hate;  
Watering the heart whose early flowers  
have died,  
And with a fresher growth replenishing  
the void.

. . . . . [St. 16]

When Athens' armies fell at Syracuse,  
And fetter'd thousands bore  
the yoke of war,  
Redemption rose up in the Attic Muse,  
Her voice their only ransom from afar:  
See! as they chant the tragic hymn, the  
car

Of the o'ermaster'd victor stops, the reins  
Fall from his hands, his idle scimitar  
Starts from its belt — he rends his cap-  
tive's chains,  
And bids him thank the bard for freedom  
and his strains.

Thus, Venice, if no stronger claim were  
thine,  
Were all thy proud historic deeds forgot,



Thy choral memory of the Bard divine,  
Thy love of Tasso, should have cut the  
knot

Which ties thee to thy tyrants; and thy lot  
Is shameful to the nations, — most of all,  
Albion! to thee: the Ocean queen should  
not

Abandon Ocean's children; in the fall  
Of Venice think of thine, despite thy  
watery wall.

I loved her from my boyhood; she to me  
Was as a fairy city of the heart,  
Rising like water-columns from the sea,  
Of joy the sojourn, and of wealth the mart;  
And Otway, Radcliffe, Schiller, Shake-  
speare's art,

Had stamp'd her image in me, and even  
so,

Although I found her thus, we did not  
part,

Perchance even dearer in her day of woe,  
Than when she was a boast, a marvel and  
a show.

I can repeople with the past — and of  
The present there is still for eye and  
thought,

And meditation chasten'd down, enough;  
And more, it may be, than I hoped or  
sought;

And of the happiest moments which were  
wrought

Within the web of my existence, some  
From thee, fair Venice! have their colors  
caught:

There are some feelings Time cannot  
benumb,

Nor Torture shake, or mine would now  
be cold and dumb.

. . . . .

But my soul wanders; I demand [St. 25  
it back

To meditate amongst decay, and stand  
A ruin amidst ruins; there to track  
Fall'n states and buried greatness, o'er a  
land

Which *was* the mightiest in its old com-  
mand,

And *is* the loveliest, and must ever be  
The master-mould of Nature's heavenly  
hand;

Wherein were cast the heroic and the free,  
The beautiful, the brave, the lords of  
earth and sea,

The commonwealth of kings, the men of  
Rome!

And even since, and now, fair Italy!

Thou art the garden of the world, the  
home

Of all Art yields, and Nature can decree;  
Even in thy desert, what is like to thee?

Thy very weeds are beautiful, thy waste  
More rich than other climes' fertility;

Thy wreck a glory, and thy ruin graced  
With an immaculate charm which cannot  
be defaced.

The moon is up, and yet it is not night;  
Sunset divides the sky with her; a sea  
Of glory streams along the Alpine height  
Of blue Friuli's mountains; Heaven is  
free

From clouds, but of all colors seems to  
be, —

Melted to one vast Iris of the West, —  
Where the Day joins the past Eternity,  
While, on the other hand, meek Dian's  
crest

Floats through the azure air — an island  
of the blest!

A single star is at her side, and reigns  
With her o'er half the lovely heaven; but  
still

Yon sunny sea heaves brightly, and re-  
mains

Roll'd o'er the peak of the far Rhætian  
hill,

As Day and Night contending were, until  
Nature reclaim'd her order: — gently  
flows

The deep-dyed Brenta, where their hues  
instil

The odorous purple of a new-born rose,  
Which streams upon her stream, and  
glass'd within it glows.

Fill'd with the face of heaven, which, from  
afar,

Comes down upon the waters; all its  
hues,

From the rich sunset to the rising star,  
Their magical variety diffuse:

And now they change; a paler shadow  
strews

Its mantle o'er the mountains; parting  
day

Dies like the dolphin, whom each pang  
imbues

With a new color as it gasps away,

The last still loveliest, — till — 'tis gone  
— and all is gray.

Italia! oh, Italia! thou who hast [St. 42  
The fatal gift of beauty, which became  
A funeral dower of present woes and past,  
On thy sweet brow is sorrow plough'd  
by shame,  
And annals grav'd in characters of flame.  
Oh, God! that thou wert in thy naked-  
ness  
Less lovely or more powerful, and couldst  
claim  
Thy right, and awe the robbers back, who  
press  
To shed thy blood, and drink the tears  
of thy distress;

Then might'st thou more appal; or, less  
desired,  
Be homely and be peaceful, undeplord  
For thy destructive charms; then, still  
untired,  
Would not be seen the armed torrents  
pour'd  
Down the deep Alps; nor would the  
hostile horde  
Of many-nation'd spoilers from the Po  
Quaff blood and water; nor the stranger's  
sword  
Be thy sad weapon of defence, and so,  
Victor or vanquish'd, thou the slave of  
friend or foe.

Yet, Italy! through every other [St. 47  
land

Thy wrongs should ring, and shall, from  
side to side;  
Mother of Arts! as once of arms; thy  
hand  
Was then our guardian, and is still our  
guide;  
Parent of our religion! whom the wide  
Nations have knelt to for the keys of  
heaven!  
Europe, repentant of her parricide,  
Shall yet redeem thee, and, all backward  
driven,  
Roll the barbarian tide, and sue to be  
forgiven.

Oh Rome! my country! city of [St. 78  
the soul

The orphans of the heart must turn to  
thee,  
Lone mother of dead empires! and con-  
trol  
In their shut breast their petty misery.  
What are our woes and sufferance?  
Come and see  
The cypress, hear the owl, and plod your  
way  
O'er steps of broken thrones and temples,  
Ye!  
Whose agonies are evils of a day —  
A world is at our feet as fragile as our  
clay.

The Niobe of nations! there she stands,  
Childless and crownless, in her voiceless  
woe;  
An empty urn within her wither'd hands,  
Whose holy dust was scatter'd long ago;  
The Scipios' tomb contains no ashes now,  
The very sepulchres lie tenantless  
Of their heroic dwellers: dost thou flow,  
Old Tiber! through a marble wilderness?  
Rise, with thy yellow waves, and mantle  
her distress.

The Goth, the Christian, Time, War,  
Flood, and Fire,  
Have dealt upon the seven-hill'd city's  
pride;  
She saw her glories star by star expire,  
And up the steep barbarian monarchs  
ride,  
Where the car climb'd the Capitol; far  
and wide  
Temple and tower went down, nor left a  
site:  
Chaos of ruins! who shall trace the void,  
O'er the dim fragments cast a lunar light,  
And say, "here was, or is," where all is  
doubly night?

Can tyrants but by tyrants con- [St. 96  
quer'd be,  
And Freedom find no champion and no  
child  
Such as Columbia saw arise when she  
Sprung forth a Pallas, arm'd and unde-  
filed?  
Or must such minds be nourish'd in the  
wild,  
Deep in the unpruned forest, 'midst the  
roar  
Of cataracts, where nursing Nature smiled

On infant Washington? Has Earth no  
 more  
 Such seeds within her breast, or Europe  
 no such shore?

. . . . .

Where is the rock of Triumph, [St. 112  
 the high place

Where Rome embraced her heroes?  
 where the steep

Tarpeian? fittest goal of Treason's race,  
 The promontory whence the Traitor's

Leap  
 Cured all ambition. Did the conquerors  
 heap

Their spoils here? Yes; and in yon field  
 below,

A thousand years of silenced factions  
 sleep —

The Forum, where the immortal accents  
 glow,

And still the eloquent air breathes —  
 burns with Cicero!

. . . . .

Arches on arches! as it were [St. 128  
 that Rome,

Collecting the chief trophies of her line,  
 Would build up all her triumphs in one

dome,  
 Her Coliseum stands; the moonbeams

shine  
 As 'twere its natural torches, for divine  
 Should be the light which streams here to

illumine  
 This long-explored but still exhaustless  
 mine

Of contemplation; and the azure gloom  
 Of an Italian night, where the deep skies

assume

Hues which have words, and speak to ye  
 of heaven,

Floats o'er this vast and wondrous monu-  
 ment,

And shadows forth its glory. There is  
 given

Unto the things of earth, which Time hath  
 bent,

A spirit's feeling, and where he hath leant  
 His hand, but broke his scythe, there is a

power  
 And magic in the ruin'd battlement,  
 For which the palace of the present hour

Must yield its pomp, and wait till ages  
 are its dower.

[St. 139

And here the buzz of eager nations ran,  
 In murmur'd pity, or loud-roar'd ap-  
 plause,

As man was slaughter'd by his fellow man.  
 And wherefore slaughter'd? wherefore,

but because  
 Such were the bloody Circus' genial laws,  
 And the imperial pleasure. — Wherefore

not?  
 What matters where we fall to fill the  
 maws

Of worms — on battle-plains or listed  
 spot?

Both are but theatres where the chief  
 actors rot.

I see before me the Gladiator lie:  
 He leans upon his hand — his manly brow

Consents to death, but conquers agony,  
 And his droop'd head sinks gradually

low —  
 And through his side the last drops, ebb-  
 ing slow

From the red gash, fall heavy, one by one,  
 Like the first of a thunder-shower; and

now  
 The arena swims around him — he is  
 gone,

Ere ceased the inhuman shout which hail'd  
 the wretch who won.

He heard it, but he heeded not — his eyes  
 Were with his heart, and that was far

away;  
 He reck'd not of the life he lost nor prize,  
 But where his rude hut by the Danube lay,

There were his young barbarians all at  
 play,

There was their Dacian mother — he,  
 their sire,

Butcher'd to make a Roman holiday —  
 All this rush'd with his blood — Shall he

expire  
 And unavenged? Arise! ye Goths, and  
 glut your ire!

But here, where Murder breathed her  
 bloody steam;

And here, where buzzing nations choked  
 the ways,

And roar'd or murmur'd like a mountain  
 stream

Dashing or winding as its torrent strays;  
 Here, where the Roman million's blame  
 or praise

Was death or life, the playthings of a crowd,  
My voice sounds much — and fall the stars' faint rays  
On the arena void — seats crush'd, walls bow'd —  
And galleries, where my steps seem echoes strangely loud.

A ruin — yet what ruin! from its mass  
Walls, palaces, half-cities, have been rear'd;  
Yet oft the enormous skeleton ye pass,  
And marvel where the spoil could have appear'd.  
Hath it indeed been plunder'd, or but clear'd?  
Alas! developed, opens the decay,  
When the colossal fabric's form is near'd:  
It will not bear the brightness of the day,  
Which streams too much on all years, man, have reft away.

But when the rising moon begins to climb  
Its topmost arch, and gently pauses there;  
When the stars twinkle through the loops of time,  
And the low night-breeze waves along the air  
The garland-forest, which the gray walls wear,  
Like laurels on the bald first Cæsar's head;  
When the light shines serene but doth not glare,  
Then in this magic circle raise the dead:  
Heroes have trod this spot — 'tis on their dust ye tread.

But where is he, the Pilgrim of [St. 164  
my song,  
The being who upheld it through the past?  
Methinks he cometh late and tarries long.  
He is no more — these breathings are his last;  
His wanderings done, his visions ebbing fast  
And he himself as nothing: — if he was  
Aught but a phantasy, and could be class'd  
With forms which live and suffer — let that pass —  
His shadow fades away into Destruction's mass,

Which gathers shadow, substance, life, and all  
That we inherit in its mortal shroud,  
And spreads the dim and universal pall  
Through which all things grow phantoms; and the cloud  
Between us sinks, and all which ever glow'd,  
Till Glory's self is twilight, and displays  
A melancholy halo scarce allow'd  
To hover on the verge of darkness; rays  
Sadder than saddest night, for they distract the gaze,

And send us prying into the abyss,  
To gather what we shall be when the frame  
Shall be resolved to something less than this  
Its wretched essence; and to dream of fame,  
And wipe the dust from off the idle name  
We never more shall hear, — but never more,  
Oh, happier thought! can we be made the same:  
It is enough in sooth that *once* we bore  
These fardels of the heart — the heart whose sweat was gore.

But I forget. — My Pilgrim's [St. 175  
shrine is won,  
And he and I must part, — so let it be —  
His task and mine alike are nearly done;  
Yet once more let us look upon the sea;  
The midland ocean breaks on him and me;  
And from the Alban Mount we now behold  
Our friend of youth, that Ocean, which when we  
Beheld it last by Calpe's rock unfold  
Those waves, we follow'd on till the dark Euxine roll'd

Upon the blue Symplegades: long years —  
Long, though not very many — since have done  
Their work on both; some suffering and some tears  
Have left us nearly where we had begun:  
Yet not in vain our mortal race hath run;  
We have had our reward, and it is here, —  
That we can yet feel gladden'd by the sun,

And reap from earth, sea, joy almost as dear  
As if there were no man to trouble what is clear.

Oh! that the Desert were my dwelling-place;  
With one fair Spirit for my minister,  
That I might all forget the human race,  
And, hating no one, love but only her!  
Ye elements! — in whose ennobling stir  
I feel myself exalted — Can ye not  
Accord me such a being! Do I err  
In deeming such inhabit many a spot?  
Though with them to converse can rarely  
be our lot.

There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,  
There is a rapture on the lonely shore,  
There is society, where none intrudes,  
By the deep Sea, and music in its roar:  
I love not Man the less, but Nature more,  
From these our interviews, in which I  
steal  
From all I may be, or have been before,  
To mingle with the Universe, and feel  
What I can ne'er express, yet cannot all  
conceal.

Roll on, thou deep and dark blue Ocean  
— roll!  
Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in  
vain;  
Man marks the earth with ruin — his  
control  
Stops with the shore; upon the watery  
plain  
The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth  
remain  
A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,  
When, for a moment, like a drop of rain,  
He sinks into thy depths with bubbling  
groan,  
Without a grave, unknell'd, uncoffin'd,  
and unknown.

His steps are not upon thy paths — thy  
fields  
Are not a spoil for him, — thou dost arise  
And shake him from thee; the vile  
strength he wields  
For earth's destruction thou dost all de-  
spise,  
Spurning him from thy bosom to the skies,  
And send'st him, shivering in thy play-  
ful spray

And howling, to his Gods, where haply  
lies  
His petty home in some near port or  
bay  
And dashest him again to earth: — there  
let him lay.

The armaments which thunderstrike the  
walls,  
Of rock-built cities, bidding nations  
quake,  
And monarchs tremble in their capitals,  
The oak leviathans, whose huge ribs  
make  
Their clay creator the vain title take  
Of lord of thee, and arbiter of war —  
These are thy toys, and, as the snowy  
flake,  
They melt into thy yeast of waves, which  
mar  
Alike the Armada's pride or spoils of  
Trafalgar.

Thy shores are empires, changed in all  
save thee —  
Assyria, Greece, Rome, Carthage, what  
are they?  
Thy waters wash'd them power while  
they were free,  
And many a tyrant since; their shores  
obey  
The stranger, slave, or savage; their  
decay  
Has dried up realms to deserts: not so  
thou; —  
Unchangeable, save to thy wild waves'  
play,  
Time writes no wrinkle on thine azure  
brow:  
Such as creation's dawn beheld, thou  
rollest now.

Thou glorious mirror, where the Al-  
mighty's form  
Glasses itself in tempests; in all time, —  
Calm or convulsed, in breeze, or gale,  
or storm,  
Icing the pole, or in the torrid clime  
Dark-heaving — boundless, endless, and  
sublime,  
The image of eternity, the throne  
Of the Invisible; even from out thy slime  
The monsters of the deep are made;  
each zone  
Obeys thee; thou goest forth, dread,  
fathomless, alone.



And I have loved thee, Ocean! and my joy  
Of youthful sports was on thy breast to be  
Borne, like thy bubbles, onward; from  
a boy

I wanton'd with thy breakers—they to me  
Were a delight; and if the freshening sea  
Made them a terror—'twas a pleasing  
fear,

For I was as it were a child of thee,  
And trusted to thy billows far and near,  
And laid my hand upon thy mane—as I  
do here.

My task is done, my song hath ceased,  
my theme

Has died into an echo; it is fit  
The spell should break of this protracted  
dream.

The torch shall be extinguish'd which  
hath lit

My midnight lamp—and what is writ, is  
writ;

Would it were worthier! but I am not now  
That which I have been—and my visions  
flit

Less palpably before me—and the glow  
Which in my spirit dwelt is fluttering,  
faint, and low.

Farewell! a word that must be, and hath  
been—

A sound which makes us linger;— yet —  
farewell!

Ye! who have traced the Pilgrim to the  
scene

Which is his last, if in your memories dwell  
A thought which once was his, if on ye  
swell

A single recollection, not in vain  
He wore his sandal-shoon and scallop-  
shell;

Farewell! with *him* alone may rest the  
pain,

If such there were—with *you*, the moral  
of his strain.

*June 26—July 20, 1817. 1818.*

## DON JUAN

### DEDICATION

BOB SOUTHEY! You're a poet—Poet-  
laureate,

And representative of all the race;  
Although 'tis true that you turn'd out a  
Tory at

Last,—yours has lately been a com-  
mon case;

And now, my Epic Renegade! what are  
ye at?

With all the Lakers, in and out of  
place?

A nest of tuneful persons, to my eye  
Like "four and twenty Blackbirds in a  
pye;

"Which pye being open'd they began to  
sing"

(This old song and new simile holds  
good).

"A dainty dish to set before the King,"  
Or Regent, who admires such kind of  
food;—

And Coleridge, too, has lately taken wing,  
But like a hawk encumber'd with his  
hood,—

Explaining metaphysics to the nation—  
I wish he would explain his Explanation.

You, Bob! are rather insolent, you know,  
At being disappointed in your wish

To supersede all warblers here below,  
And be the only Blackbird in the dish;

And then you overstrain yourself, or so,  
And tumble downward like the flying  
fish

Gasping on deck, because you soar too  
high, Bob,

And fall for lack of moisture quite a-dry,  
Bob!

And Wordsworth, in a rather long "Ex-  
cursion"

(I think the quarto holds five hundred  
pages).

Has given a sample from the vasty version  
Of his new system to perplex the sages;

'Tis poetry—at least by his assertion,  
And may appear so when the dog-star  
rages—

And he who understands it would be able  
To add a story to the Tower of Babel.

You—Gentlemen! by dint of long  
seclusion

From better company, have kept your  
own

At Keswick, and through still continued  
fusion

Of one another's minds, at last have  
grown

To deem as a most logical conclusion,  
That poesy has wreaths for you alone;

There is a narrowness in such a notion,  
Which makes me wish you'd change  
your lakes for ocean.

I would not imitate the petty thought,  
Nor coin my self-love to so base a vice,  
For all the glory your conversion brought,  
Since gold alone should not have been  
its price,  
You have your salary; was't for that  
you wrought?

And Wordsworth has his place in the  
Excise.  
You're shabby fellows — true — but  
poets still,  
And duly seated on the immortal hill.

Your bays may hide the baldness of your  
brows —

Perhaps some virtuous blushes; — let  
them go —

To you I envy neither fruit nor boughs —  
And for the fame you would engross  
below,

The field is universal, and allows  
Scope to all such as feel the inherent  
glow;

Scott, Rogers, Campbell, Moore and  
Crabbe will try

'Gainst you the question with posterity.

For me, who, wandering with pedestrian  
Muses,

Contend not with you on the winged  
steed,

I wish your fate may yield ye, when she  
chooses,

The fame you envy, and the skill you  
need;

And recollect a poet nothing loses  
In giving to his brethren their full  
meed

Of merit, and complaint of present days  
Is not the certain path to future praise.

He that reserves his laurels for posterity  
(Who does not often claim the bright  
reversion)

Has generally no great crop to spare it,  
he

Being only injured by his own asser-  
tion;

And although here and there some glori-  
ous rarity

Arise like Titan from the sea's immer-  
sion,

The major part of such appellants go  
To — God knows where — for no one else  
can know.

If, fallen in evil days on evil tongues,  
Milton appealed to the Avenger, Time,  
If Time, the Avenger, execrates his  
wrongs,

And makes the word "Miltonic" mean  
"sublime,"

He deign'd not to belie his soul in songs,  
Nor turn his very talent to a crime;  
He did not loathe the Sire to laud the Son,  
But closed the tyrant-hater he begun.

Think'st thou, could he — the blind Old  
Man, — arise,

Like Samuel from the grave, to freeze  
once more

The blood of monarchs with his prophe-  
cies,

Or be alive again — again all hoar  
With time and trials, and those helpless  
eyes,

And heartless daughters — worn —  
and pale — and poor;

Would *he* adore a sultan? *he* obey  
The intellectual eunuch Castlereagh?

Cold-blooded, smooth-faced, placid mis-  
creant!

Dabbling its sleek young hands in  
Erin's gore

And thus for wider carnage taught to pant,  
Transferr'd to gorge upon a sister  
shore,

The vilest tool that Tyranny could  
want,

With just enough of talent, and no  
more,

To lengthen fetters by another fix'd,  
And offer poison long already mix'd.

An orator of such set trash of phrase  
Ineffably — legitimately vile,

That even its grossest flatterers dare not  
praise,

Nor foes — all nations — condescend  
to smile;

Not even a sprightly blunder's spark can  
blaze

From that Ixion grindstone's ceaseless  
toil,

That turns and turns to give the world a  
notion

Of endless torments and perpetual motion.

A bungler even in its disgusting trade,  
 And botching, patching, leaving still  
 behind  
 Something of which its masters are  
 afraid,  
 States to be curb'd, and thoughts to be  
 confined,  
 Conspiracy or Congress to be made —  
 Cobbling at manacles for all mankind —  
 A tinkering slave-maker, who mends old  
 chains,  
 With God and man's abhorrence for its  
 gains.

If we may judge of matter by the mind,  
 Emasculated to the marrow *It*  
 Hath but two objects, how to serve, and  
 bind,  
 Deeming the chain it wears even men  
 may fit,  
 Eutropius of its many masters — blind  
 To worth as freedom, wisdom as to  
 wit,  
 Fearless — because *no* feeling dwells in  
 ice,  
 Its very courage stagnates to a vice.

Where shall I turn me not to *view* its  
 bonds,  
 For I will never *feel* them; — Italy!  
 Thy late reviving Roman soul desponds  
 Beneath the lie this State-thing  
 breathed o'er thee —  
 Thy clanking chain, and Erin's yet green  
 wounds,  
 Have voices — tongues to cry aloud for  
 me.  
 Europe has slaves, allies, kings, armies  
 still,  
 And Southey lives to sing them very ill.

Meantime, Sir Laureat, I proceed to ded-  
 icate,  
 In honest simple verse, this song to  
 you.  
 And, if in flattering strains I do not pred-  
 icate,  
 'Tis that I still retain my "buff and  
 blue;"  
 My politics as yet are all to educate:  
 Apostasy's so fashionable, too,  
 To keep *one* creed's a task grown quite  
 Herculean:  
 Is it not so, my Tory, Ultra-Julian?  
*September, 1818. July 15, 1819.*

## FROM CANTO I

## POETICAL COMMANDMENTS

If ever I should condescend to [St. 204  
 prose,  
 I'll write poetical commandments,  
 which  
 Shall supersede beyond all doubt all those  
 That went before; in these I shall  
 enrich  
 My text with many things that no one  
 knows,  
 And carry precept to the highest pitch:  
 I'll call the work "Longinus o'er a Bottle,  
 Or, Every Poet his *own* Aristotle."

Thou shalt believe in Milton, Dryden,  
 Pope;  
 Thou shalt not set up Wordsworth,  
 Coleridge, Southey;  
 Because the first is crazed beyond all  
 hope,  
 The second drunk, the third so quaint  
 and mouthy:  
 With Crabbe it may be difficult to cope,  
 And Campbell's Hippocrene is some-  
 what drouthy:  
 Thou shalt not steal from Samuel Rogers,  
 nor  
 Commit — flirtation with the muse of  
 Moore.

Thou shalt not covet Mr. Sotheby's  
 Muse,  
 His Pegasus, nor anything that's his;  
 Thou shalt not bear false witness like  
 "the Blues" —  
 (There's one, at least, is very fond of  
 this);  
 Thou shalt not write, in short, but what  
 I choose;  
 This is true criticism, and you may  
 kiss —  
 Exactly as you please, or not — the rod;  
 But if you don't, I'll lay it on, by G—d!

## LABUNTUR ANNI

"*Non ego hoc ferrem calidus* [St. 212  
*juventâ*  
*Consule Planco,*" Horace said, and so  
 Say I; by which quotation there is meant a  
 Hint that some six or seven good years  
 ago

(Long ere I dreamt of dating from the  
Brenta)

I was most ready to return a blow,  
And would not brook at all this sort of  
thing

In my hot youth — when George the  
Third was King.

But now at thirty years my hair is gray —  
(I wonder what it will be like at forty?  
I thought of a peruke the other day —)

My heart is not much greener; and, in  
short, I  
Have squander'd my whole summer  
while 'twas May,

And feel no more the spirit to retort; I  
Have spent my life, both interest and  
principal,  
And deem not, what I deem'd, my soul  
invincible.

No more — no more — Oh! never more  
on me

The freshness of the heart can fall like  
dew,  
Which out of all the lovely things we see  
Extracts emotions beautiful and new,  
Hived in our bosoms like the bag o' the  
bee.

Think'st thou the honey with those ob-  
jects grew?  
Alas! 'twas not in them, but in thy  
power  
To double even the sweetness of a flower.

No more — no more — Oh! never more,  
my heart,

Canst thou be my sole world, my uni-  
verse!

Once all in all, but now a thing apart,  
Thou canst not be my blessing or my  
curse:

The illusion's gone for ever, and thou art  
Insensible, I trust, but none the worse,  
And in thy stead I've got a deal of judg-  
ment,  
Though heaven knows how it ever found  
a lodgment.

My days of love are over; me no more  
The charms of maid, wife, and still less  
of widow,  
Can make the fool of which they made  
before, —

In short, I must not lead the life I did  
do;

The credulous hope of mutual minds is  
o'er,

The copious use of claret is forbid too,  
So for a good old-gentlemanly vice,  
I think I must take up with avarice.

Ambition was my idol, which was broken  
Before the shrines of Sorrow, and of  
Pleasure;

And the two last have left me many a  
token

O'er which reflection may be made at  
leisure;

Now, like Friar Bacon's brazen head,  
I've spoken,

"Time is, Time was, Time's past:" —  
a chymic treasure

Is glittering youth, which I have spent  
betimes —

My heart in passion, and my head on  
rhymes.

What is the end of fame? 'tis but to fill  
A certain portion of uncertain paper:

Some liken it to climbing up a hill  
Whose summit, like all hills, is lost in  
vapor;

For this men write, speak, preach, and  
heroes kill,

And bards burn what they call their  
"midnight taper,"

To have, when the original is dust,  
A name, a wretched picture, and worse  
bust.

Canto I. *September, 1818.*

July 15, 1819.

## FROM CANTO II

### THE SHIPWRECK

[St. 49.]

'TWAS twilight, and the sunless day went  
down

Over the waste of waters; like a veil,  
Which, if withdrawn, would but disclose  
the frown

Of one whose hate is mask'd but to  
assail.

Thus to their hopeless eyes the night was  
shown,

And grimly darkled o'er the faces pale,  
And the dim desolate deep: twelve days  
had Fear

Been their familiar, and now Death was  
here.

Some trial had been making at a raft,  
 With little hope in such a rolling sea,  
 A sort of thing at which one would have  
   laugh'd,  
 If any laughter at such times could be,  
 Unless with people who too much have  
   quaff'd,  
 And have a kind of wild and horrid glee,  
 Half epileptical, and half hysterical:—  
 Their preservation would have been a  
   miracle.

At half-past eight o'clock, booms, hen-  
   coops, spars,  
 And all things, for a chance, had been  
   cast loose  
 That still could keep afloat the struggling  
   tars,  
 For yet they strove, although of no  
   great use:  
 There was no light in heaven but a few  
   stars,  
 The boats put off o'ercrowded with  
   their crews;  
 She gave a heel, and then a lurch to port,  
 And, going down head-foremost—sunk,  
   in short.

Then rose from sea to sky the wild fare-  
   well—  
 Then shriek'd the timid, and stood  
   still the brave—  
 Then some leap'd overboard with dread-  
   ful yell,  
 As eager to anticipate their grave;  
 And the sea yawn'd around her like a  
   hell.  
 And down she suck'd with her the  
   whirling wave,  
 Like one who grapples with his enemy,  
 And strives to strangle him before he die.

And first one universal shriek there  
   rush'd,  
 Louder than the loud ocean, like a  
   crash  
 Of echoing thunder; and then all was  
   hush'd,  
 Save the wild wind and the remorseless  
   dash  
 Of billows; but at intervals there gush'd,  
 Accompanied with a convulsive splash,  
 A solitary shriek, the bubbling cry  
 Of some strong swimmer in his agony.

## HAIDÉE

[St. III.]

How long in his damp trance young  
   Juan lay  
 He knew not, for the earth was gone for  
   him.  
 And time had nothing more of night nor  
   day  
 For his congealing blood, and senses  
   dim;  
 And how this heavy faintness pass'd  
   away  
 He knew not, till each painful pulse and  
   limb,  
 And tingling vein, seem'd throbbing  
   back to life,  
 For Death, though vanquish'd, still re-  
   tired with strife.

His eyes he open'd, shut, again unclosed,  
 For all was doubt and dizziness; he  
   thought  
 He still was in the boat, and had but  
   dozed,  
 And felt again with his despair o'er-  
   wrought,  
 And wish'd it death in which he had  
   reposed,  
 And then once more his feelings back  
   were brought,  
 And slowly by his swimming eyes was  
   seen  
 A lovely female face of seventeen.

'Twas bending close o'er his, and the  
   small mouth  
 Seem'd almost prying into his for  
   breath;  
 And chafing him, the soft warm hand of  
   youth  
 Recall'd his answering spirits back  
   from death;  
 And, bathing his chill temples, tried to  
   soothe  
 Each pulse to animation, till beneath  
 Its gentle touch and trembling care, a sigh  
 To these kind efforts made a low reply.

Then was the cordial pour'd, and mantle  
   flung  
 Around his scarce-clad limbs; and the  
   fair arm  
 Raised higher the faint head which o'er  
   it hung;  
 And her transparent cheek, all pure  
   and warm,



Pillow'd his death-like forehead; then  
 she wrung  
 His dewy curls, long drench'd by every  
 storm;  
 And watch'd with eagerness each throb  
 that drew  
 A sigh from his heaved bosom — and  
 hers, too.

And lifting him with care into the cave,  
 The gentle girl, and her attendant, —  
 one  
 Young, yet her elder, and of brow less  
 grave,  
 And more robust of figure — then  
 begun  
 To kindle fire, and as the new flames  
 gave  
 Light to the rocks that roof'd them,  
 which the sun  
 Had never seen, the maid, or whatso'er  
 She was, appear'd distinct, and tall,  
 and fair.

Her brow was overhung with coins of  
 gold,  
 That sparkled o'er the auburn of her  
 hair,  
 Her clustering hair, whose longer locks  
 were roll'd  
 In braids behind; and though her  
 stature were  
 Even of the highest for a female mould,  
 They nearly reach'd her heel; and in  
 her air  
 There was a something which bespoke  
 command,  
 As one who was a lady in the land.

Her hair, I said, was auburn; but her  
 eyes  
 Were black as death, their lashes the  
 same hue,  
 Of downcast length, in whose silk shadow  
 lies  
 Deepest attraction; for when to the  
 view  
 Forth from its raven fringe the full glance  
 flies,  
 Ne'er with such force the swiftest  
 arrow flew;  
 'Tis as the snake late coil'd, who pours  
 his length,  
 And hurls at once his venom and his  
 strength.

Her brow was white and low, her cheek's  
 pure dye

Like twilight rosy still with the set sun;  
 Short upper lip — sweet lips! that make  
 us sigh

Ever to have seen such; for she was one  
 Fit for the model of a statuary  
 (A race of mere impostors, when all's  
 done —

I've seen much finer women, ripe and  
 real,  
 Than all the nonsense of their stone  
 ideal).

I'll tell you why I say so, for 't is just  
 One should not rail without a decent  
 cause:

There was an Irish lady, to whose bust  
 I ne'er saw justice done, and yet she  
 was

A frequent model; and if e'er she must  
 Yield to stern Time and Nature's  
 wrinkling laws,

They will destroy a face which mortal  
 thought

Ne'er compass'd, nor less mortal chisel  
 wrought.

And such was she, the lady of the cave:  
 Her dress was very different from the  
 Spanish,

Simpler, and yet of colors not so grave;  
 For, as you know, the Spanish women  
 banish

Bright hues when out of doors, and yet,  
 while wave

Around them (what I hope will never  
 vanish)

The basquina and the mantilla, they  
 Seem at the same time mystical and gay.

But with our damsel this was not the  
 case:

Her dress was many-color'd, finely  
 spun;

Her locks curl'd negligently round her  
 face,

But through them gold and gems pro-  
 fusely shone:

Her girdle sparkled, and the richest lace  
 Flow'd in her veil, and many a precious  
 stone

Flash'd on her little hand; but, what  
 was shocking,

Her small snow feet had slippers, but no  
 stocking.

The other female's dress was not unlike,  
 But of inferior materials: she  
 Had not so many ornaments to strike,  
 Her hair had silver only, bound to be  
 Her dowry; and her veil, in form alike,  
 Was coarser; and her air, though firm,  
 less free;  
 Her hair was thicker, but less long; her  
 eyes  
 As black, but quicker, and of smaller size.

And these two tended him, and cheer'd  
 him both  
 With food and raiment, and those soft  
 attentions,  
 Which are — (as I must own) — of  
 female growth,  
 And have ten thousand delicate in-  
 ventions:  
 They made a most superior mess of broth,  
 A thing which poesy but seldom men-  
 tions,  
 But the best dish that e'er was cook'd  
 since Homer's  
 Achilles order'd dinner for new comers.

The coast — I think it was the [St. 181  
 coast that I  
 Was just describing — Yes, it *was* the  
 coast —

Lay at this period quiet as the sky,  
 The sands untumbled, the blue waves  
 untost,  
 And all was stillness, save the sea-bird's  
 cry,  
 And dolphin's leap, and little billow  
 crost  
 By some low rock or shelve, that made  
 it fret  
 Against the boundary it scarcely wet.

And forth they wander'd, her sire being  
 gone,  
 As I have said, upon an expedition;  
 And mother, brother, guardian, she had  
 none,  
 Save Zoe, who, although with due  
 precision  
 She waited on her lady with the sun,  
 Thought daily service was her only  
 mission,  
 Bringing warm water, wreathing her long  
 tresses,  
 And asking now and then for cast-off  
 dresses.

It was the cooling hour, just when the  
 rounded  
 Red sun sinks down behind the azure  
 hill,  
 Which then seems as if the whole earth  
 it bounded,  
 Circling all nature, hush'd, and dim,  
 and still,  
 With the far mountain-crescent half  
 surrounded  
 On one side, and the deep sea calm and  
 chill,  
 Upon the other, and the rosy sky,  
 With one star sparkling through it like  
 an eye.

And thus they wander'd forth, and hand  
 in hand,  
 Over the shining pebbles and the shells,  
 Glided along the smooth and harden'd  
 sand,  
 And in the worn and wild receptacles  
 Work'd by the storms, yet work'd as it  
 were plann'd,  
 In hollow halls, with sparry roofs and  
 cells,  
 They turn'd to rest; and, each clasp'd  
 by an arm,  
 Yielded to the deep twilight's purple  
 charm.

They look'd up to the sky, whose floating  
 glow  
 Spread like a rosy ocean, vast and  
 bright;  
 They gazed upon the glittering sea below,  
 Whence the broad moon rose circling  
 into sight;  
 They heard the waves splash, and the  
 wind so low,  
 And saw each other's dark eyes darting  
 light  
 Into each other — and, beholding this,  
 Their lips drew near, and clung into a kiss;

A long, long kiss, a kiss of youth, and love,  
 And beauty, all concentrating like rays  
 Into one focus, kindled from above;  
 Such kisses as belong to early days,  
 Where heart, and soul, and sense, in con-  
 cert move,  
 And the blood's lava, and the pulse a  
 blaze,  
 Each kiss a heart-quake, — for a kiss's  
 strength,  
 I think it must be reckon'd by its length.

By length I mean duration; theirs endured  
 Heaven knows how long — no doubt  
 they never reckon'd;  
 And if they had, they could not have  
 secured  
 The sum of their sensations to a second;  
 They had not spoken; but they felt  
 allured,  
 As if their souls and lips each other  
 beckon'd,  
 Which, being join'd, like swarming bees  
 they clung —  
 Their hearts the flowers from whence the  
 honey sprung.

They were alone, but not alone as they  
 Who shut in chambers think it lone-  
 liness;  
 The silent ocean, and the starlight bay,  
 The twilight glow, which momentarily  
 grew less,  
 The voiceless sands, and dropping caves,  
 that lay  
 Around them, made them to each other  
 press,  
 As if there were no life beneath the sky  
 Save theirs, and that their life could  
 never die.

They fear'd no eyes nor ears on that lone  
 beach,  
 They felt no terrors from the night;  
 they were  
 All in all to each other; though their  
 speech  
 Was broken words, they *thought* a lan-  
 guage there, —  
 And all the burning tongues the passions  
 teach  
 Found in one sigh the best interpreter  
 Of nature's oracle — first love, — that all  
 Which Eve has left her daughters since  
 her fall.

Alas! the love of women! it is known  
 To be a lovely and a fearful thing;  
 For all of theirs upon that die is thrown,  
 And if 'tis lost, life hath no more to  
 bring  
 To them but mockeries of the past alone,  
 And their revenge is as the tiger's  
 spring,  
 Deadly, and quick, and crushing; yet,  
 as real  
 Torture is theirs, what they inflict they  
 feel.

They are right; for man, to man so oft  
 unjust,  
 Is always so to women; one sole bond  
 Awaits them, treachery is all their trust;  
 Taught to conceal, their bursting  
 hearts despond  
 Over their idol, till some wealthier lust  
 Buys them in marriage — and what  
 rests beyond?  
 A thankless husband, next a faithless  
 lover,  
 Then dressing, nursing, praying, and all's  
 over.

Some take a lover, some take drams or  
 prayers,  
 Some mind their household, others dis-  
 sipation,  
 Some run away, and but exchange their  
 cares,  
 Losing the advantage of a virtuous  
 station;  
 Few changes e'er can better their affairs,  
 Theirs being an unnatural situation,  
 From the dull palace to the dirty hovel:  
 Some play the devil, and then write a  
 novel.

Haidée was Nature's bride, and knew not  
 this:  
 Haidée was Passion's child, born where  
 the sun  
 Showers triple light, and scorches even  
 the kiss  
 Of his gazelle-eyed daughters; she was  
 one  
 Made but to love, to feel that she was his  
 Who was her chosen: what was said or  
 done  
 Elsewhere was nothing. She had nought  
 to fear,  
 Hope, care, nor love beyond, — her heart  
 beat *here*.

And oh! that quickening of the heart,  
 that beat!  
 How much it costs us! yet each rising  
 throb  
 Is in its cause as its effect so sweet,  
 That wisdom, ever on the watch to rob  
 Joy of its alchemy, and to repeat  
 Fine truths; even Conscience, too, has  
 a tough job  
 To make us understand each good old  
 maxim,  
 So good — I wonder Castlereagh don't  
 tax 'em.

And now 'twas done — on the lone shore  
 were plighted  
 Their hearts; the stars, their nuptial  
 torches, shed  
 Beauty upon the beautiful they lighted;  
 Ocean their witness, and the cave their  
 bed,  
 By their own feelings hallow'd and united,  
 Their priest was Solitude, and they  
 were wed:  
 And they were happy, for to their young  
 eyes  
 Each was an angel, and earth paradise.

Oh, Love! of whom great Cæsar was the  
 suitor,  
 Titus the master, Antony the slave,  
 Horace, Catullus, scholars, Ovid tutor,  
 Sappho the sage blue-stocking, in whose  
 grave  
 All those may leap who rather would be  
 neuter —  
 (Leucadia's rock still overlooks the  
 wave) —  
 Oh, Love! thou art the very god of evil,  
 For, after all, we cannot call thee devil.

Thou mak'st the chaste connubial state  
 precarious,  
 And jestest with the brows of mightiest  
 men:  
 Cæsar and Pompey, Mahomet, Belisarius,  
 Have much employ'd the muse of  
 history's pen:  
 Their lives and fortunes were extremely  
 various,  
 Such worthies Time will never see  
 again;  
 Yet to these four in three things the  
 same luck holds,  
 They all were heroes, conquerors, and  
 cuckolds.

Thou mak'st philosophers; there's Epi-  
 curus  
 And Aristippus, a material crew!  
 Who to immoral courses would allure us  
 By theories quite practicable too;  
 If only from the devil they would insure  
 us,  
 How pleasant were the maxim (not  
 quite new),  
 "Eat, drink, and love; what can the  
 rest avail us?"  
 So said the royal sage Sardanapalus.

But Juan! had he quite forgotten Julia?  
 And should he have forgotten her so  
 soon?  
 I can't but say it seems to me most truly a  
 Perplexing question; but, no doubt,  
 the moon  
 Does these things for us, and whenever  
 newly a  
 Strong palpitation rises, 'tis her boon,  
 Else how the devil is it that fresh features  
 Have such a charm for us poor human  
 creatures?

I hate inconstancy — I loathe, detest,  
 Abhor, condemn, abjure the mortal  
 made  
 Of such quicksilver clay that in his  
 breast  
 No permanent foundation can be laid;  
 Love, constant love, has been my con-  
 stant guest,  
 And yet last night, being at a mas-  
 querade,  
 I saw the prettiest creature, fresh from  
 Milan,  
 Which gave me some sensations like a  
 villain.

But soon Philosophy came to my aid,  
 And whisper'd, "Think of every sacred  
 tie!"  
 "I will, my dear Philosophy!" I said,  
 "But then her teeth, and then, oh,  
 Heaven! her eye!  
 I'll just inquire if she be wife or maid,  
 Or neither — out of curiosity."  
 "Stop!" cried Philosophy, with air so  
 Grecian  
 (Though she was masqued then as a fair  
 Venetian);

"Stop!" so I stopp'd. — But to return:  
 that which  
 Men call inconstancy is nothing more  
 Than admiration due where nature's rich  
 Profusion with young beauty covers o'er  
 Some favor'd object; and as in the niche  
 A lovely statue we almost adore,  
 This sort of adoration of the real  
 Is but a heightening of the "beau ideal."

'Tis the perception of the beautiful,  
 A fine extension of the faculties,  
 Platonic, universal, wonderful,  
 Drawn from the stars, and filter'd  
 through the skies,

Without which life would be extremely  
dull;

In short, it is the use of our own eyes,  
With one or two small senses added, just  
To hint that flesh is form'd of fiery dust.

Yet 'tis a painful feeling, and unwilling,  
For surely if we always could perceive  
In the same object graces quite as killing  
As when she rose upon us like an Eve,  
'Twould save us many a heart-ache,  
many a shilling

(For we must get them anyhow, or  
grieve),  
Whereas, if one sole lady pleased forever  
How pleasant for the heart, as well as  
liver.

The heart is like the sky, a part of heaven,  
But changes night and day, too, like the  
sky;  
Now o'er it clouds and thunder must be  
driven,

And darkness and destruction as on  
high:  
But when it hath been scorch'd, and  
pierced, and riven,  
Its storms expire in water-drops; the  
eye  
Pours forth at last the heart's blood  
turn'd to tears,  
Which make the English climate of our  
years.

The liver is the lazaret of bile,  
But very rarely executes its function,  
For the first passion stays there such a  
while,

That all the rest creep in and form a  
junction,  
Like knots of vipers on a dunghill's soil,  
Rage, fear, hate, jealousy, revenge,  
compunction,  
So that all mischiefs spring up from this  
entrail,  
Like earthquakes from the hidden fire  
call'd "central."

In the mean time, without proceeding  
more

In this anatomy, I've finish'd now  
Two hundred and odd stanzas as before,  
That being about the number I'll allow  
Each canto of the twelve, or twenty-four;  
And, laying down my pen, I make my  
bow,

Leaving Don Juan and Haidée to plead  
For them and theirs with all who deign  
to read.

Canto II, *December, 1818, January, 1819.*  
July 5, 1819.

## FROM CANTO III

### THE ISLES OF GREECE

THE isles of Greece, the isles of Greece!  
Where burning Sappho loved and sung,  
Where grew the arts of war and peace, —  
Where Delos rose, and Phœbus sprung!  
Eternal summer gilds them yet,  
But all, except their sun, is set.

The Scian and the Teian muse,  
The hero's harp, the lover's lute,  
Have found the fame your shores refuse:  
Their place of birth alone is mute  
To sounds which echo further west  
Than your sires' "Islands of the Blest."

The mountains look on Marathon —  
And Marathon looks on the sea;  
And musing there an hour alone,  
I dream'd that Greece might still be  
free;  
For standing on the Persians' grave,  
I could not deem myself a slave.

A king sate on the rocky brow  
Which looks o'er sea-born Salamis;  
And ships, by thousands, lay below,  
And men in nations; — all were his!  
He counted them at break of day —  
And when the sun set, where were they?

And where are they? and where art thou,  
My country? On thy voiceless shore  
The heroic lay is tuneless now —  
The heroic bosom beats no more!  
And must thy lyre, so long divine,  
Degenerate into hands like mine?

'Tis something, in the dearth of fame,  
Though link'd among a fetter'd race,  
To feel at least a patriot's shame,  
Even as I sing, suffuse my face;  
For what is left the poet here?  
For Greeks a blush — for Greece a tear.

Must we but weep o'er days more blest?  
Must we but blush? — Our fathers bled.  
Earth! render back from out thy breast  
A remnant of our Spartan dead!



Of the three hundred grant but three,  
To make a new Thermopylæ!

What, silent still? and silent all?

Ah! no; — the voices of the dead  
Sound like a distant torrent's fall,

And answer, "Let one living head,  
But one arise, — we come, we come!"  
'Tis but the living who are dumb.

In vain — in vain: strike other chords;

Fill high the cup with Samian wine!

Leave battles to the Turkish hordes,

And shed the blood of Scio's vine!

Hark! rising to the ignoble call —  
How answers each bold Bacchanal!

You have the Pyrrhic dance as yet;

Where is the Pyrrhic phalanx gone?

Of two such lessons, why forget

The nobler and the manlier one?

You have the letters Cadmus gave —

Think ye he meant them for a slave?

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine!

We will not think of themes like these!

It made Anacreon's song divine;

He served — but served Polycrates —

A tyrant; but our masters then

Were still, at least, our countrymen.

The tyrant of the Chersonese

Was freedom's best and bravest friend;

That tyrant was Miltiades!

Oh! that the present hour would lend

Another despot of the kind!

Such chains as his were sure to bind.

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine!

On Suli's rock, and Parga's shore,

Exists the remnant of a line

Such as the Doric mothers bore;

And there, perhaps, some seed is sown,

The Heracleidan blood might own.

Trust not for freedom to the Franks,

They have a king who buys and sells;

In native swords and native ranks,

The only hope of courage dwells:

But Turkish force, and Latin fraud,

Would break your shield, however broad.

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine!

Our virgins dance beneath the shade —

I see their glorious black eyes shine;

But gazing on each glowing maid,

My own the burning tear-drop laves,

To think such breasts must suckle slaves.

Place me on Sunium's marbled steep,

Where nothing, save the waves and I,

May hear our mutual murmurs sweep;

There, swan-like, let me sing and die:

A land of slaves shall ne'er be mine —

Dash down yon cup of Samian wine!

### CONCLUSION OF CANTO III

THUS sung, or would, or could, or [St. 87  
should have sung,

The modern Greek, in tolerable verse;

If not like Orpheus quite, when Greece  
was young,

Yet in these times he might have done  
much worse:

His strain display'd some feeling — right  
or wrong;

And feeling, in a poet, is the source  
Of others' feeling; but they are such

liars,

And take all colors — like the hands of  
dyers.

But words are things, and a small drop  
of ink,

Falling like dew, upon a thought, pro-  
duces

That which makes thousands, perhaps  
millions, think;

'Tis strange, the shortest letter which  
man uses

Instead of speech, may form a lasting link  
Of ages; to what straits old Time re-  
duces

Frail man when paper — even a rag like  
this,

Survives himself, his tomb, and all that's  
his!

And when his bones are dust, his grave  
a blank,

His station, generation, even his nation,  
Become a thing, or nothing, save to rank

In chronological commemoration,

Some dull MS. oblivion long has sank,

Or graven stone found in a barrack's  
station

In digging the foundation of a closet,  
May turn his name up, as a rare deposit.

And glory long has made the sages smile;

'Tis something, nothing, words, illusion,  
wind —

Depending more upon the historian's  
style

Than on the name a person leaves  
behind:

Troy owes to Homer what whist owes to  
Hoyle;

The present century was growing blind  
To the great Marlborough's skill in giving  
knocks,

Until his late Life by Archdeacon Coxe.

Milton's the prince of poets — so we say;

A little heavy, but no less divine:

An independent being in his day —

Learn'd, pious, temperate in love and  
wine;

But his life falling into Johnson's way,

We're told this great high priest of all  
the Nine

Was whipt at college — a harsh sire —  
odd spouse,

For the first Mrs. Milton left his house.

All these are, *certainly*, entertaining facts,

Like Shakespeare's stealing deer, Lord  
Bacon's bribes;

Like Titus' youth, and Cæsar's earliest  
acts;

Like Burns (whom Doctor Currie well  
describes);

Like Cromwell's pranks; — but although  
truth exacts

These amiable descriptions from the  
scribes,

As most essential to their hero's story,

They do not much contribute to his glory.

All are not moralists, like Southey, when

He prated to the world of "Panti-  
socracy:"

Or Wordsworth unexcised, unhired, who  
then

Season'd his pedlar poems with de-  
mocracy;

Or Coleridge, long before his flighty pen

Let to the Morning Post its aristocracy;

When he and Southey, following the  
same path,

Espoused two partners (milliners of  
Bath).

Such names at present cut a convict  
figure,

The very Botany Bay in moral geo-  
graphy;

Their royal treason, renegado rigor,

Are good manure for their more bare  
biology.

Wordsworth's last quarto, by the way,  
is bigger

Than any since the birthday of typog-  
raphy;

A drowsy frowzy poem, call'd the "Ex-  
cursion,"

Writ in a manner which is my aversion.

He there builds up a formidable dyke

Between his own and others' intellect;

But Wordsworth's poem, and his fol-  
lowers, like

Joanna Southcote's Shiloh, and her  
sect,

Are things which in this century don't  
strike

The public mind, — so few are the  
elect;

And the new births of both their stale  
virginities

Have proved but dropsies, taken for  
divinities.

But let me to my story: I must own,

If I have any fault, it is digression,

Leaving my people to proceed alone,

While I soliloquize beyond expression:

But these are my addresses from the  
throne,

Which put off business to the ensuing  
session:

Forgetting each omission is a loss to

The world, not quite so great as Ariosto.

I know that what our neighbors call  
"*longueurs*,"

(We've not so good a *word*, but have  
the *thing*,

In that complete perfection which insures  
An epic from Bob Southey every  
Spring —)

Form not the true temptation which  
allures

The reader; but 'twould not be hard  
to bring

Some fine examples of the *épopée*,

To prove its grand ingredient is *ennui*.

We learn from Horace, "Homer some-  
times sleeps;"

We feel without him, Wordsworth  
sometimes wakes, —

To show with what complacency he  
creeps,

With his dear "*Wagoners*," around his  
lakes.

He wishes for "a boat" to sail the  
 deeps —  
 Of ocean? — No, of air; and then he  
 makes

Another outcry for "a little boat,"  
 And drivels seas to set it well afloat.

If he must fain sweep o'er the ethereal  
 plain,  
 And Pegasus runs restive in his  
 "Wagon,"

Could he not beg the loan of Charles's  
 Wain?

Or pray Medea for a single dragon?  
 Or if, too classic for his vulgar brain,  
 He fear'd his neck to venture such a  
 nag on,

And he must needs mount nearer to the  
 moon,

Could not the blockhead ask for a bal-  
 loon?

"Pedlars," and "Boats," and "Wagons!"  
 Oh! ye shades

Of Pope and Dryden, are we come to  
 this?

That trash of such sort not alone evades  
 Contempt, but from the bathos' vast  
 abyss

Floats scumlike uppermost, and these  
 Jack Cades

Of sense and song above your graves  
 may hiss —

The "little boatman" and his "Peter  
 Bell"

Can sneer at him who drew "Achito-  
 phel!"

T' our tale. — The feast was over, the  
 slaves gone,

The dwarfs and dancing girls had all  
 retired;

The Arab lore and poet's song were done,  
 And every sound of revelry expired;

The lady and her lover, left alone,  
 The rosy flood of twilight's sky ad-  
 mired;

Ave Maria! o'er the earth and sea,  
 That heavenliest hour of Heaven is  
 worthiest thee!

Ave Maria! blessed be the hour!  
 The time, the clime, the spot, where I so  
 oft

Have felt that moment in its fullest  
 power

Sink o'er the earth so beautiful and  
 soft,  
 While swung the deep bell in the distant  
 tower,

Or the faint dying day-hymn stole aloft,  
 And not a breath crept through the rosy  
 air,

And yet the forest leaves seem'd stirr'd  
 with prayer.

Ave Maria! 'tis the hour of prayer!

Ave Maria! 'tis the hour of love!

Ave Maria! may our spirits dare  
 Look up to thine and to thy Son's  
 above!

Ave Maria! oh that face so fair!  
 Those downcast eyes beneath the Al-  
 mighty dove —

What though 'tis but a pictured image  
 — strike —

That painting is no idol, — 'tis too like.

Some kinder casuists are pleased to say,  
 In nameless print — that I have no de-  
 votion;

But set those persons down with me to  
 pray,

And you shall see who has the properest  
 notion

Of getting into heaven the shortest way;  
 My altars are the mountains and the  
 ocean,

Earth, air, stars, — all that springs from  
 the great Whole,

Who hath produced, and will receive the  
 soul.

Sweet hour of twilight! — in the solitude  
 Of the pine forest, and the silent shore  
 Which bounds Ravenna's immemorial  
 wood,

Rooted where once the Adrian wave  
 flow'd o'er,

To where the last Cæsarean fortress stood,  
 Evergreen forest! which Boccaccio's  
 lore

And Dryden's lay made haunted ground  
 to me,

How have I loved the twilight hour and  
 thee!

The shrill cicalas, people of the pine,

Making their summer lives one cease-  
 less song,

Were the sole echoes, save my steed's  
 and mine,

And vesper bell's that rose the boughs  
 along;  
 The spectre huntsman of Onesti's line,  
 His hell-dogs, and their chase, and the  
 fair throng  
 Which learn'd from this example not to  
 fly  
 From a true lover,—shadow'd my  
 mind's eye.

Oh, Hesperus! thou bringest all good  
 things—  
 Home to the weary, to the hungry  
 cheer,  
 To the young bird the parent's brooding  
 wings,  
 The welcome stall to the o'rlabor'd  
 steer;  
 Whate'er of peace about our hearthstone  
 clings,  
 Whate'er our household gods protect of  
 dear,  
 Are gather'd round us by thy look of  
 rest;  
 Thou bring'st the child, too, to the  
 mother's breast.

Soft hour! which wakes the wish and  
 melts the heart  
 Of those who sail the seas, on the first  
 day  
 When they from their sweet friends are  
 torn apart;  
 Or fills with love the pilgrim on his way  
 As the far bell of vesper makes him start,  
 Seeming to weep the dying day's decay;  
 Is this a fancy which our reason scorns?  
 Ah! surely nothing dies but something  
 mourns!

When Nero perish'd by the justest doom  
 Which ever the destroyer yet destroy'd,  
 Amidst the roar of liberated Rome,  
 Of nations freed, and the world over-  
 joy'd,  
 Some hands unseen strew'd flowers upon  
 his tomb:  
 Perhaps the weakness of a heart not  
 void  
 Of feeling for some kindness done, when  
 power  
 Had left the wretch an uncorrupted hour.

But I'm digressing; what on earth has  
 Nero,  
 Or any such like sovereign buffoons,

To do with the transactions of my hero,  
 More than such madmen's fellow-man  
 — the moon's?  
 Sure my invention must be down at zero,  
 And I grown one of many "wooden  
 spoons"  
 Of verse (the name with which we Can-  
 tabs please  
 To dub the last of honors in degrees).

I feel this tediousness will never do —  
 'Tis being *too* epic, and I must cut  
 down  
 (In copying) this long canto into two;  
 They'll never find it out, unless I own  
 The fact, excepting some experienced  
 few;  
 And then as an improvement 'twill be  
 shown:  
 I'll prove that such the opinion of the  
 critic is  
 From Aristotle *passim*. — See Παιτηκὴς.  
 Canto III. 1819-1820. August 8, 1821.

#### FROM CANTO IV

NOTHING so difficult as a beginning [St. 1  
 In poesy, unless perhaps the end;  
 For oftentimes when Pegasus seems  
 winning  
 The race, he sprains a wing, and down  
 we tend,  
 Like Lucifer when hurl'd from heaven  
 for sinning;  
 Our sin the same, and hard as his to  
 mend,  
 Being pride, which leads the mind to soar  
 too far,  
 Till our own weakness shows us what we  
 are.

But time, which brings all beings to their  
 level,  
 And sharp Adversity, will teach at last  
 Man, — and, as we would hope, — per-  
 haps the devil,  
 That neither of their intellects are  
 vast:  
 While youth's hot wishes in our red veins  
 revel,  
 We know not this — the blood flows on  
 too fast:  
 But as the torrent widens towards the  
 ocean,  
 We ponder deeply on each past emotion.

As boy, I thought myself a clever fellow,  
And wish'd that others held the same  
opinion;

They took it up when my days grew more  
mellow,  
And other minds acknowledged my  
dominion:

Now my sere fancy "falls into the yellow  
Leaf," and Imagination droops her  
pinion,

And the sad truth which hovers o'er my  
desk

Turns what was once romantic to bur-  
lesque.

And if I laugh at any mortal thing,  
'Tis that I may not weep; and if I  
weep,

'Tis that our nature cannot always bring  
Itself to apathy, for we must steep  
Our hearts first in the depths of Lethe's  
spring,

Ere what we least wish to behold will  
sleep:

Thetis baptized her mortal son in Styx;  
A mortal mother would on Lethe fix.

Some have accused me of a strange design  
Against the creed and morals of the  
land,

And trace it in this poem every line;  
I don't pretend that I quite understand  
My own meaning when I would be *very*  
fine;

But the fact is that I have nothing  
plann'd,

Unless it were to be a moment merry,  
A novel word in my vocabulary.

To the kind reader of our sober clime  
This way of writing will appear exotic;

Pulci was sire of the half-serious rhyme,  
Who sang when chivalry was more  
Quixotic,

And revell'd in the fancies of the time,  
True knights, chaste dames, huge giant  
kings despotic:

But all these, save the last, being obsolete,  
I chose a modern subject as more meet.

How I have treated it, I do not know;  
Perhaps no better than they have  
treated me,

Who have imputed such designs as show  
Not what they saw, but what they  
wish'd to see;

But if it gives them pleasure, be it so,  
This is a liberal age, and thoughts are  
free:

Meantime Apollo plucks me by the ear,  
And tells me to resume my story here.

Canto IV. 1819-1820.

August 8, 1821.

## FROM CANTO XI

LONDON LITERATURE AND SOCIETY

JUAN knew several languages — [St. 53  
as well

He might — and brought them up with  
skill, in time

To save his fame with each accomplish'd  
belle,

Who still regretted that he did not  
rhyme.

There wanted but this requisite to swell  
His qualities (with them) into sublime:

Lady Fitz-Frisky, and Miss Mævia Man-  
nish,

Both long'd extremely to be sung in  
Spanish.

However, he did pretty well, and was  
Admitted as an aspirant to all

The coteries, and, as in Banquo's glass,  
At great assemblies or in parties small,  
He saw ten thousand living authors pass,  
That being about their average nu-  
meral;

Also the eighty "greatest living poets,"  
As every paltry magazine can show *it's*.

In twice five years the "greatest living  
poet."

Like to the champion fisty in the ring,  
Is call'd on to support his claim, or show it,  
Although 'tis an imaginary thing.

Even I — albeit I'm sure I did not know it,  
Nor sought of foolscap subjects to be  
king, —

Was reckon'd a considerable time,  
The grand Napoleon of the realms of  
rhyme.

But Juan was my Moscow, and Faliero  
My Leipsic, and my Mont Saint Jean  
seems Cain:

"La Belle Alliance" of dunces down at  
zero,

Now that the Lion's fall'n, may rise  
again:



But I will fall at least as fell my hero;  
 Nor reign at all, or as a *monarch* reign;  
 Or to some lonely isle of gaolers go,  
 With turncoat Southey for my turnkey  
 Lowe.

Sir Walter reign'd before me; Moore  
 and Campbell

Before and after: but now grown more  
 holy,  
 The Muses upon Sion's hill must ramble  
 With poets almost clergymen, or  
 wholly:

And Pegasus has a psalmodic amble  
 Beneath the very Reverend Rowley  
 Powley,

Who shoes the glorious animal with stilts,  
 A modern Ancient Pistol — "by these  
 hilts!"

Still he excels that artificial hard  
 Laborer in the same vineyard, though  
 the vine

Yields him but vinegar for his reward, —  
 That neutralized dull Dorus of the Nine;  
 That swarthy Sporus, neither man nor  
 bard;

That ox of verse, who *ploughs* for every  
 line: —

Cambyses' roaring Romans beat at least  
 The howling Hebrews of Cybele's  
 priest. —

Then there's my gentle Euphues; who,  
 they say,

Sets up for being a sort of *moral me*:<sup>1</sup>  
 He'll find it rather difficult some day

To turn out both, or either, it may be.  
 Some persons think that Coleridge hath  
 the sway;

And Wordsworth has supporters, two  
 or three;

And that deep-mouth'd Bæotian "Sav-  
 age Lander"

Has taken for a swan rogue Southey's  
 gander.

John Keats, who was kill'd off by one  
 critique,<sup>2</sup>

Just as he really promised something  
 great,

If not intelligible, without Greek  
 Contrived to talk about the Gods of  
 late,

Much as they might have been supposed  
 to speak.

Poor fellow! His was an untoward fate;  
 'Tis strange the mind, that very fiery  
 particle,  
 Should let itself be snuff'd out by an  
 article.

The list grows long of live and dead pre-  
 tenders

To that which none will gain — or none  
 will know

The conqueror at least; who, ere Time  
 renders

His last award, will have the long grass  
 grow

Above his burnt-out brain, and sapless  
 cinders.

If I might augur, I should rate but low  
 Their chances; — they're too numerous,  
 like the thirty

Mock tyrants, when Rome's annals wax'd  
 but dirty.

This is the literary *lower* empire,  
 Where the prætorian bands take up  
 the matter; —

A "dreadful trade," like his who "gathers  
 samphire,"

The insolent soldiery to soothe and  
 flatter,

With the same feelings as you'd coax a  
 vampire.

Now, were I once at home and in good  
 satire,

I'd try conclusions with those Janizaries,  
 And show them *what* an intellectual war is.

I think I know a trick or two, would turn  
 Their flanks; — but it is hardly worth  
 my while

With such small gear to give myself con-  
 cern:

Indeed I've not the necessary bile;  
 My natural temper's really aught but  
 stern,

And even my Muse's worse reproof's a  
 smile;

And then she drops a brief and modern  
 curtsy,

And glides away, assured she never hurts  
 ye.

<sup>1</sup> Barry Cornwall, once called "a moral Byron."

<sup>2</sup> The entirely mistaken idea that Keats' decline and death were due to the severe criticism on his *Endymion* in the Quarterly Review, was shared by Shelley, and was generally prevalent until the publication of Milnes's *Life of Keats*. See H. Buxton Forman's edition of Keats's *Works*, Vol. IV., pp. 225-272, and Colvin's *Life of Keats*, pp. 124 and 208.

My Juan, whom I left in deadly peril  
Amongst live poets and blue ladies,  
pass'd

With some small profit through that field  
so sterile,

Being tired in time, and neither least  
nor last,

Left it before he had been treated very  
ill;

And henceforth found himself more  
gaily class'd

Amongst the higher spirits of the day,  
The sun's true son, no vapor, but a ray.

His morns he pass'd in business — which  
dissected,

Was like all business, a laborious nothing

That leads to lassitude, the most infected  
And Centaur Nessus garb of mortal  
clothing,

And on our sofas makes us lie dejected,  
And talk in tender horrors of our loathing

All kinds of toil, save for our country's  
good —

Which grows no better, though 'tis time  
it should.

His afternoons he pass'd in visits, luncheons,

Lounging, and boxing; and the twilight hour

In riding round those vegetable puncheons  
Call'd "Parks," where there is neither  
fruit nor flower

Enough to gratify a bee's slight munchings;

But after all it is the only "bower"  
(In Moore's phrase) where the fashionable fair

Can form a slight acquaintance with  
fresh air.

Then dress, then dinner, then awakes the  
world!

Then glare the lamps, then whirl the  
wheels, then roar

Through street and square fast flashing  
chariots hurl'd

Like harness'd meteors; then along the  
floor

Chalk mimics painting; then festoons are  
twirl'd;

Then roll the brazen thunders of the  
door,

Which opens to the thousand happy few  
An earthly Paradise of "Or Molu."

There stands the noble hostess, nor shall  
sink

With the three-thousandth curtsy;  
there the waltz,

The only dance which teaches girls to  
think,

Makes one in love even with its very  
faults.

Saloon, room, hall, o'erflow beyond their  
brink,

And long the latest of arrivals halts,  
'Midst royal dukes and dames condemn'd  
to climb,

And gain an inch of staircase at a time.

Thrice happy he who, after a survey  
Of the good company, can win a corner,

A door that's *in* or boudoir *out* of the  
way,

Where he may fix himself like small  
"Jack Horner,"

And let the Babel round run as it may,  
And look on as a mourner, or a scorner,

Or an approver, or a mere spectator,  
Yawning a little as the night grows later.

But this won't do, save by and by; and  
he

Who, like Don Juan, takes an active  
share,

Must steer with care through all that  
glittering sea

Of gems and plumes and pearls and  
silks, to where

He deems it is his proper place to be;  
Dissolving in the waltz to some soft  
air,

Or prouder prancing with mercurial  
skill,

Where Science marshals forth her own  
quadrille.

Or, if he dance not, but hath higher views  
Upon an heiress or his neighbor's bride,

Let him take care that that which he  
pursues

Is not at once too palpably descried.  
Full many an eager gentleman oft rues

His haste; impatience is a blundering  
guide

Amongst a people famous for reflection,  
Who like to play the fool with circum-

spection.

But, if you can contrive, get next at supper;  
Or if forestall'd, get opposite and ogle:—

Oh, ye ambrosial moments! always upper

In mind, a sort of sentimental bogle,  
Which sits for ever upon memory's crupper,

The ghost of vanish'd pleasures once in vogue! Ill

Can tender souls relate the rise and fall  
Of hopes and fears which shake a single ball.

But these precautionary hints can touch  
Only the common run, who must pursue,

And watch, and ward; whose plans a word too much

Or little overturns; and not the few  
Or many (for the number's sometimes such)

Whom a good mien, especially if new,  
Or fame, or name, for wit, war, sense, or nonsense,

Permits whate'er they please, or *did* not long since.

Our hero, as a hero, young and handsome,

Noble, rich, celebrated, and a stranger  
Like other slaves of course must pay his ransom,

Before he can escape from so much danger

As will environ a conspicuous man.  
Some

Talk about poetry, and "rack and manger,"

And ugliness, disease, as toil and trouble;—

I wish they knew the life of a young noble.

They are young, but know not youth—  
it is anticipated;

Handsome but wasted, rich without a sou;

Their vigor in a thousand arms is dissipated;

Their cash comes *from*, their wealth goes *to* a Jew;

Both senates see their nightly votes participated

Between the tyrant's and the tribunes' crew;

And having voted, dined, drunk, gamed, and whored,  
The family vault receives another lord.

But "*carpe diem*," Juan, "*carpe*, [St. 86 *carpe!*"]

To-morrow sees another race as gay  
And transient and devour'd by the same harpy.

"Life's a poor player,"—then "play out the play,  
Ye villains!" and above all keep a sharp eye

Much less on what you do than what you say:

Be hypocritical, be cautious, be Not what you *seem*, but always what you *see*.

But how shall I relate in other cantos  
Of what befell our hero in the land,  
Which 'tis the common cry and lie to vaunt as

A moral country? But I hold my hand—

For I disdain to write an Atalantis;  
But 'tis as well at once to understand  
You are *not* a moral people, and you know it

Without the aid of too sincere a poet.

What Juan saw and underwent shall be  
My topic, with of course the due restriction

Which is required by proper courtesy;  
And recollect the work is only fiction,  
And that I sing of neither mine nor me,  
Though every scribe, in some slight turn of diction,

Will hint allusions never *meant*. Ne'er doubt

*This*—when I speak, I *don't hint*, but *speak out*.

Whether he married with the third or fourth

Offspring of some sage husband-hunting countess,

Or whether with some virgin of more worth

(I mean in Fortune's matrimonial bounties)

He took to regularly peopling Earth,  
Of which your lawful, awful wedlock fount is,—

Or whether he was taken in for damages,  
For being too excursive in his homages, —

Is yet within the unread events of time.  
Thus far, go forth, thou lay, which I  
will back

Against the same given quantity of  
rhyme,  
For being as much the subject of at-  
tack

As ever yet was any work sublime,  
By those who love to say that white is  
black.

So much the better! — I may stand alone,  
But would not change my free thoughts  
for a throne.

Canto XI. 1822-1823. August 29, 1823.

## THE VISION OF JUDGMENT<sup>1</sup>

BY

QUEVEDO REDIVIVUS

SUGGESTED BY THE COMPOSITION SO EN-  
TITLED BY THE AUTHOR OF "WAT TYLER"

"A Daniel come to judgment! yea, a Daniel!  
I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word."

### PREFACE

It hath been wisely said, that "One fool makes  
many;" and it hath been poetically observed —

"That fools rush in where angels fear to tread."  
— POPE.

If Mr. Southey had not rushed in where he had  
no business, and where he never was before, and  
never will be again, the following poem would not  
have been written. It is not impossible that it may  
be as good as his own, seeing that it cannot, by any  
species of stupidity, natural or acquired, be *worse*.  
The gross flattery, the dull impudence, the renegade  
intolerance, and impious cant, of the poem by the  
author of "Wat Tyler," are something so stupen-  
dous as to form the sublime of himself — containing  
the quintessence of his own attributes.

So much for his poem — a word on his preface.  
In this preface it has pleased the magnanimous Lau-  
reate to draw the picture of a supposed "Satanic  
School," the which he doth recommend to the  
notice of the legislature; thereby adding to his  
other laurels the ambition of those of an informer.  
If there exists anywhere, except in his imagination,  
such a School, is he not sufficiently armed against it

by his own intense vanity? The truth is, that  
there are certain writers whom Mr. S. imagines, like  
Scrub, to have "talked of *him*;" for they laughed  
consumedly."

I think I know enough of most of the writers to  
whom he is supposed to allude, to assert, that they,  
in their individual capacities, have done more good,  
in the charities of life, to their fellow-creatures, in  
any one year, than Mr. Southey has done harm to  
himself by his absurdities in his whole life; and  
this is saying a great deal. But I have a few ques-  
tions to ask.

1stly, Is Mr. Southey the author of "Wat Tyler"?

2ndly, Was he not refused a remedy at law by  
the highest judge of his beloved England, because it  
was a blasphemous and seditious publication?

3dly, Was he not entitled by William Smith, in full  
parliament, "a rancorous renegade?"

4thly, Is he not poet laureate, with his own lines  
on Martin the regicide staring him in the face?

And, 5thly, Putting the four preceding items  
together, with what conscience dare he call the  
attention of the laws to the publications of others,  
be they what they may?

I say nothing of the cowardice of such a proceed-  
ing, its meanness speaks for itself; but I wish to  
touch upon the  *motive*, which is neither more nor  
less than that Mr. S. has been laughed at a little  
in some recent publications, as he was of yore in the  
"Anti-Jacobin," by his present patrons. Hence  
all this "skimble-scamble stuff" about "Satanic,"  
and so forth. However, it is worthy of him —  
"*qualis ab incepto*."

If there is anything obnoxious to the political  
opinions of a portion of the public in the following  
poem, they may thank Mr. Southey. He might  
have written hexameters, as he has written every-  
thing else, for aught that the writer cared — had  
they been upon another subject. But to attempt  
to canonize a monarch, who, whatever were his  
household virtues, was neither a successful nor a  
patriot king, — inasmuch as several years of his  
reign passed in war with America and Ireland, to  
say nothing of the aggression upon France, — like  
all other exaggeration, necessarily begets opposi-  
tion. In whatever manner he may be spoken of in  
this new "Vision," his *public* career will not be more  
favorably transmitted by history. Of his private  
virtues (although a little expensive to the nation)  
there can be no doubt.

With regard to the supernatural personages  
treated of, I can only say that I know as much  
about them, and (as an honest man) have a better  
right to talk of them than Robert Southey. I have  
also treated them more tolerantly. The way in  
which that poor insane creature, the Laureate, deals  
about his judgments in the next world, is like his own  
judgment in this. If it was not completely ludi-  
crous, it would be something worse. I don't think  
that there is much more to say at present.

QUEVEDO REDIVIVUS.

SAINT PETER sat by the celestial gate :

His keys were rusty, and the lock was  
dull,

So little trouble had been given of late ;

Not that the place by any means was  
full,

But since the Gallic era "eighty-eight"

The devils had ta'en a longer, stronger  
pull,

<sup>1</sup> Southey published in 1821 a poem called *A Vision of Judgment*, in which he extolled George III for his personal virtues, and described his reception into heaven. In the Preface of this poem he bitterly attacked Byron for immorality in his writings. See full accounts of the affair in the biographies of Byron and Southey. The briefest and best treatment of it is in Nichol's *Life of Byron*, toward the end of Chap. VIII.

And a "pull altogether," as they say  
At sea — which drew most souls another  
way.

The angels all were singing out of tune,  
And hoarse with having little else to  
do,  
Excepting to wind up the sun and moon,  
Or curb a runaway young star or two,  
Or wild colt of a comet, which too soon  
Broke out of bounds o'er the ethereal  
blue,  
Splitting some planet with its playful  
tail,  
As boats are sometimes by a wanton  
whale.

The guardian seraphs had retired on  
high,  
Finding their charges past all care be-  
low;  
Terrestrial business fill'd nought in the  
sky  
Save the recording angel's black  
bureau;  
Who found, indeed, the facts to multiply  
With such rapidity of vice and woe,  
That he had stripp'd off both his wings  
in quills,  
And yet was in arrear of human ills.

His business so augmented of late years,  
That he was forced, against his will  
no doubt,  
(Just like those cherubs, earthly minis-  
ters,)  
For some resource to turn himself  
about,  
And claim the help of his celestial peers,  
To aid him ere he should be quite worn  
out  
By the increased demand for his re-  
marks:  
Six angels and twelve saints were named  
his clerks.

This was a handsome board — at least  
for heaven;  
And yet they had even then enough  
to do,  
So many conquerors' cars were daily  
driven,  
So many kingdoms fitted up anew;  
Each day too slew its thousands six or  
seven,  
Till at the crowning carnage, Waterloo,

They threw their pens down in divine  
disgust —  
The page was so besmear'd with blood  
and dust.

This by the way; 'tis not mine to record  
What angels shrink from: even the  
very devil  
On this occasion his own work abhorrd,  
So surfeited with the infernal revel:  
Though he himself had sharpen'd every  
sword,  
It almost quench'd his innate thirst of  
evil.  
(Here Satan's sole good work deserves  
insertion —  
'Tis, that he has both generals in rever-  
sion.)

Let's skip a few short years of hollow  
peace,  
Which peopled earth no better, hell as  
wont,  
And heaven none — they form the  
tyrant's lease,  
With nothing but new names sub-  
scribed upon 't;  
'Twill one day finish: meantime they  
increase,  
"With seven heads and ten horns," and  
all in front,  
Like Saint John's foretold beast; but  
ours are born  
Less formidable in the head than horn.

In the first year of freedom's second  
dawn  
Died George the Third; although no  
tyrant, one  
Who shielded tyrants, till each sense with-  
drawn  
Left him nor mental nor external  
sun;  
A better farmer ne'er brush'd dew from  
lawn,  
A worse king never left a realm un-  
done!  
He died — but left his subjects still be-  
hind,  
One half as mad — and t'other no less  
blind.

He died! his death made no great stir  
on earth:  
His burial made some pomp; there was  
profusion



Of velvet, gilding, brass, and no great  
dearth  
Of aught but tears — save those shed  
by collusion.

For these things may be bought at their  
true worth;

Of elegy there was the due infusion —  
Bought also; and the torches, cloaks,  
and banners,

Herald's and relics of old Gothic manners,

Form'd a sepulchral melodrame. Of all  
The fools who flock'd to swell or see  
the show,

Who cared about the corpse? The  
funeral

Made the attraction, and the black the  
woe.

There throb'd not there a thought  
which pierced the pall;

And when the gorgeous coffin was laid  
low,

It seem'd the mockery of hell to fold  
The rottenness of eighty years in gold.

So mix his body with the dust! It might  
Return to what it *must* far sooner, were  
The natural compound left alone to fight  
Its way back into earth, and fire, and  
air;

But the unnatural balsams merely blight  
What nature made him at his birth, as  
bare

As the mere million's base unummied  
clay —

Yet all his spices but prolong decay.

He's dead — and upper earth with him  
has done;

He's buried; save the undertaker's bill,  
Or lapidary scrawl, the world is gone

For him, unless he left a German will;  
But where's the proctor who will ask his  
son?

In whom his qualities are reigning still,  
Except that household virtue, most un-  
common,

Of constancy to a bad, ugly woman.

"God save the king!" It is a large  
economy

In God to save the like; but if he will  
Be saving, all the better; for not one  
am I

Of those who think damnation better  
still:

I hardly know too if not quite alone am I  
In this small hope of bettering future ill  
By circumscribing, with some slight re-  
striction,  
The eternity of hell's hot jurisdiction.

I know this is unpopular; I know  
'Tis blasphemous; I know one may be  
damn'd

For hoping no one else may e'er be so;  
I know my catechism; I know we're  
cramm'd

With the best doctrines till we quite  
o'erflow;

I know that all save England's church  
have sham'm'd.

And that the other twice two hundred  
churches

And synagogues have made a *damn'd* bad  
purchase.

God help us all! God help me too! I am,  
God knows, as helpless as the devil can  
wish,

And not a whit more difficult to damn,  
Than is to bring to land a late-hook'd  
fish,

Or to the butcher to purvey the lamb;  
Not that I'm fit for such a noble dish,  
As one day will be that immortal fry  
Of almost everybody born to die.

Saint Peter sat by the celestial gate,  
And nodded o'er his keys; when, lo!  
there came

A wondrous noise he had not heard of  
late —

A rushing sound of wind, and stream,  
and flame;

In short, a roar of things extremely great,  
Which would have made aught save a  
saint exclaim;

But he, with first a start and then a wink,  
Said, "There's another star gone out, I  
think!"

But ere he could return to his repose,  
A cherub flapp'd his right wing o'er  
his eyes —

At which St. Peter yawn'd, and rubb'd  
his nose:

"Saint porter," said the angel, "prithee  
rise!"

Waving a goodly wing, which glow'd, as  
glows

An earthly peacock's tail, with heavenly  
dyes:

To which the saint replied, "Well, what's the matter?

"Is Lucifer come back with all this clatter?"

"No," quoth the cherub; "George the Third is dead."

"And who *is* George the Third?" replied the apostle:

"*What George? what Third?*" "The king of England," said

The angel. "Well! he won't find kings to jostle

Him on his way; but does he wear his head?

Because the last we saw here had a tussle,

And ne'er would have got into heaven's good graces,

Had he not flung his head in all our faces.

"He was, if I remember, king of France; That head of his, which could not keep a crown

On earth, yet ventured in my face to advance

A claim to those of martyrs — like my own:

If I had had my sword, as I had once

When I cut ears off, I had cut him down;

But having but my *keys*, and not my brand,

I only knock'd his head from out his hand.

"And then he set up such a headless howl,

That all the saints came out and took him in;

And there he sits by St. Paul, cheek by jowl;

That fellow Paul — the parvenu! The skin

Of St. Bartholomew, which makes his cowl

In heaven, and upon earth redeem'd his sin,

So as to make a martyr, never sped Better than did this weak and wooden head.

"But had it come up here upon its shoulders,

There would have been a different tale to tell:

The fellow-feeling in the saints' beholders

Seems to have acted on them like a spell,

And so this very foolish head heaven solders

Back on its trunk: it may be very well, And seems the custom here, to overthrow Whatever has been wisely done below."

The angel answer'd, "Peter! do not pout: The king who comes has head and all entire,

And never knew much what it was about —

He did as doth the puppet — by its wire,

And will be judged like all the rest, no doubt:

My business and your own is not to inquire

Into such matters, but to mind our cue — Which is to act as we are bid to do."

While thus they spak', the angelic caravan,

Arriving like a rush of mighty wind, Cleaving the fields of space, as doth the swan

Some silver stream (say Ganges, Nile or Inde,

Or Thames, or Tweed), and 'midst them an old man

With an old soul, and both extremely blind,

Halted before the gate, and in his shroud Seated their fellow traveller on a cloud.

But bringing up the rear of this bright host

A Spirit of a different aspect waved His wings, like thunder-clouds above some coast

Whose barren beach with frequent wrecks is paved;

His brow was like the deep when tempest-toss'd;

Fierce and unfathomable thoughts engraved

Eternal wrath on his immortal face, And *where* he gazed a gloom pervaded space.

As he drew near, he gazed upon the gate Ne'er to be enter'd more by him or Sin,

With such a glance of supernatural hate, As made Saint Peter wish himself

within;

He patter'd with his keys at a great rate,  
And sweated through his apostolic skin :  
Of course his perspiration was but ichor,  
Or some such other spiritual liquor.

The very cherubs huddled all together,  
Like birds when soars the falcon ; and  
they felt  
A tingling to the tip of every feather,  
And form'd a circle like Orion's belt  
Around their poor old charge ; who scarce  
knew whither  
His guards had led him, though they  
gently dealt  
With royal manes (for by many stories,  
And true, we learn the angels all are  
Tories).

As things were in this posture, the gate  
flew  
Asunder, and the flashing of its hinges  
Fling over space an universal hue  
Of many-color'd flame, until its tinges  
Reach'd even our speck of earth, and  
made a new  
Aurora borealis spread its fringes  
O'er the North Pole ; the same seen,  
when ice-bound,  
By Captain Parry's crew, in "Melville's  
Sound."

And from the gate thrown open issued  
beaming  
A beautiful and mighty Thing of  
Light,  
Radiant with glory, like a banner stream-  
ing  
Victorious from some world-o'erthrow-  
ing fight :  
My poor comparisons must needs be  
teeming  
With earthly likenesses, for here the  
night  
Of clay obscures our best conceptions,  
saving  
Johanna Southcote, or Bob Southey  
raving.

'Twas the archangel Michael ; all men  
know  
The make of angels and archangels,  
since  
There's scarce a scribbler has not one to  
show,  
From the fiends' leader to the angels'  
prince ;

There also are some altar-pieces, though  
I really can't say that they much  
evinced  
One's inner notions of immortal spirits ;  
But let the connoisseurs explain *their*  
merits.

Michael flew forth in glory and in good ;  
A goodly work of him from whom all  
glory  
And good arise ; the portal past — he  
stood ;  
Before him the young cherubs and  
saints hoary —  
(I say *young*, begging to be understood  
By looks, not years ; and should be  
very sorry  
To state, they were not older than St.  
Peter,  
But merely that they seem'd a little  
sweeter).

The cherubs and the saints bow'd down  
before  
That arch-angelic hierarch, the first  
Of essences angelical, who wore  
The aspect of a god ; but this ne'er  
nursed  
Pride in his heavenly bosom, in whose  
core  
No thought, save for his Master's  
service, durst  
Intrude, however glorified and high ;  
He knew him but the viceroy of the sky.

He and the sombre, silent Spirit met —  
They knew each other both for good  
and ill ;  
Such was their power, that neither could  
forget  
His former friend and future foe ; but  
still  
There was a high, immortal, proud regret  
In either's eye, as if 'twere less their  
will  
Than destiny to make the eternal years  
Their date of war, and their "champ  
clos" the spheres.

But here they were in neutral space : we  
know  
From Job, that Satan hath the power  
to pay  
A heavenly visit thrice a year or so ;  
And that the "sons of God," like those  
of clay,

Must keep him company; and we might  
show

From the same book, in how polite a  
way

The dialogue is held between the Powers  
Of Good and Evil — but 'twould take up  
hours.

And this is not a theologic tract,  
To prove with Hebrew and with Arabic,  
If Job be allegory or a fact,

But a true narrative; and thus I pick  
From out the whole but such and such an  
act

As sets aside the slightest thought of  
trick.

'Tis every tittle true, beyond suspicion,  
And accurate as any other vision.

The spirits were in neutral space, before  
The gate of heaven; like eastern  
thresholds is

The place where Death's grand cause is  
argued o'er,

And souls despatch'd to that world or  
to this;

And therefore Michael and the other  
wore

A civil aspect: though they did not  
kiss,

Yet still between his Darkness and his  
Brightness

There pass'd a mutual glance of great  
politeness.

The Archangel bow'd, not like a modern  
beau,

But with a graceful Oriental bend,  
Pressing one radiant arm just where be-  
low

The heart in good men is supposed to  
tend;

He turn'd as to an equal, not too low,  
But kindly; Satan met his ancient  
friend

With more hauteur, as might an old  
Castilian

Poor noble meet a mushroom rich civilian.

He merely bent his diabolic brow

An instant; and then raising it, he  
stood

In act to assert his right or wrong, and  
show

Cause why King George by no means  
could or should

Make out a case to be exempt from woe  
Eternal, more than other kings, endued  
With better sense and hearts, whom his-  
tory mentions,  
Who long have "paved hell with their  
good intentions."

Michael began: "What wouldst thou  
with this man,  
Now dead, and brought before the  
Lord? What ill

Hath he wrought since his mortal race  
began,

That thou canst claim him? Speak!  
and do thy will,

If it be just: if in this earthly span  
He hath been greatly failing to fulfil  
His duties as a king and mortal, say,  
And he is thine; if not, let him have  
way."

"Michael!" replied the Prince of Air,  
"even here,

Before the Gate of him thou servest,  
must

I claim my subject: and will make appear  
That as he was my worshipper in dust,  
So shall he be in spirit, although dear

To thee and thine, because nor wine nor  
lust

Were of his weaknesses; yet on the  
throne

He reign'd o'er millions to serve me  
alone.

"Look to *our* earth, or rather *mine*; it was,  
*Once, more* thy Master's: but I triumph  
not

In this poor planet's conquest; nor, alas;  
Need he thou servest envy me my lot;  
With all the myriads of bright worlds  
which pass

In worship round him, he may have  
forgot

Yon weak creation of such paltry things;  
I think few worth damnation save their  
kings, —

"And these but as a kind of quit-rent, to  
Assert my right as lord: and even had  
I such an inclination, it were (as you  
Well know) superfluous; they are  
grown so bad,

That hell has nothing better left to do  
Than leave them to themselves: so  
much more mad

And evil by their own internal curse,  
Heaven cannot make them better, nor I  
worse.

"Look to the earth, I said, and say again:  
When this old, blind, mad, helpless,  
weak, poor worm  
Began in youth's first bloom and flush to  
reign,  
The world and he both wore a different  
form,  
And much of earth and all the watery  
plain  
Of ocean call'd him king: through  
many a storm  
His isles had floated on the abyss of  
time;  
For the rough virtues chose them for their  
clime.

"He came to his sceptre young; he  
leaves it old:  
Look to the state in which he found his  
realm,  
And left it; and his annals too behold,  
How to a minion first he gave the helm;  
How grew upon his heart a thirst for gold;  
The beggar's vice, which can but over-  
whelm  
The meanest hearts; and for the rest,  
but glance  
Thine eye along America and France.

"'Tis true, he was a tool from first to last  
(I have the workmen safe); but as a  
tool  
So let him be consumed. From out the  
past  
Of ages, since mankind have known the  
rule  
Of monarchs—from the bloody rolls  
amass'd  
Of sin and slaughter—from the  
Cæsar's school,  
Take the worst pupil; and produce a  
reign  
More drench'd with gore, more cumber'd  
with the slain.

"He ever warr'd with freedom and the  
free:  
Nations as men, home subjects, foreign  
foes,  
So that they utter'd the word 'Liberty!'  
Found George the Third their first  
opponent. Whose

History was ever stain'd as his will be  
With national and individual woes?  
I grant his household abstinence; I grant  
His neutral virtues, which most monarchs  
want;

"I know he was a constant consort; own  
He was a decent sire, and middling  
lord.  
All this is much, and most upon a throne;  
As temperance, if at Apicius' board,  
Is more than at an anchorite's supper  
shown.  
I grant him all the kindest can accord;  
And this was well for him, but not for  
those  
Millions who found him what oppression  
chose.

"The New World shook him off; the  
Old yet groans  
Beneath what he and his prepared, if  
not  
Completed: he leaves heirs on many  
thrones  
To all his vices, without what begot  
Compassion for him—his tame virtues;  
drones  
Who sleep, or despots who have now  
forgot  
A lesson which shall be re-taught them,  
wake  
Upon the thrones of earth; but let them  
quake!

"Five millions of the primitive, who hold  
The faith which makes ye great on  
earth, implored  
A *part* of that vast *all* they held of old,—  
Freedom to worship—not alone your  
Lord,  
Michael, but you, and you, Saint Peter!  
cold  
Must be your souls, if you have not  
abhor'd  
The foe to Catholic participation  
In all the license of a Christian nation.

"True! he allow'd them to pray God:  
but as  
A consequence of prayer, refused the  
law  
Which would have placed them upon the  
same base  
With those who did not hold the saints  
in awe."



But here Saint Peter started from his place,  
 And cried, "You may the prisoner withdraw:  
 Ere heaven shall ope her portals to this Guelph,  
 While I am guard, may I be damn'd myself!

"Sooner will I with Cerberus exchange  
 My office (and *his* is no sinecure)  
 Than see this royal Bedlam bigot range  
 The azure fields of heaven, of that be sure!"  
 "Saint!" replied Satan, "you do well to avenge  
 The wrongs he made your satellites endure;  
 And if to this exchange you should be given,  
 I'll try to coax *our* Cerberus up to heaven!"

Here Michael interposed: "Good saint!  
 and devil!

Pray, not so fast; you both outrun discretion.  
 Saint Peter! you were wont to be more civil!

Satan, excuse this warmth of his expression,  
 And condescension to the vulgar's level:  
 Even saints sometimes forget themselves in session.  
 Have you got more to say?" — "No."  
 — "If you please,  
 I'll trouble you to call your witnesses."

Then Satan turn'd and waved his swarthy hand,  
 Which stirr'd with its electric qualities  
 Clouds farther off than we can understand,  
 Although we find him sometimes in our skies;  
 Infernal thunder shook both sea and land  
 In all the planets, and hell's batteries  
 Let off the artillery, which Milton mentions  
 As one of Satan's most sublime inventions.

This was a signal unto such damned souls  
 As have the privilege of their damnation  
 Extended far beyond the mere controls  
 Of worlds past, present, or to come;  
 no station

Is theirs particularly in the rolls  
 Of hell assign'd; but where their inclination  
 Or business carries them in search of game,  
 They may range freely — being damn'd the same.

They're proud of this — as very well they may,  
 It being a sort of knighthood, or gilt key  
 Stuck in their loins; or like to an "entré"  
 Up the back stairs, or such free-masonry.  
 I borrow my comparisons from clay,  
 Being clay myself. Let not those spirits be  
 Offended with such base low likenesses;  
 We know their posts are nobler far than these.

When the great signal ran from heaven to hell —  
 About ten million times the distance reckon'd  
 From our sun to its earth, as we can tell  
 How much time it takes up, even to a second,  
 For every ray that travels to dispel  
 The fogs of London, through which, dimly beacon'd  
 The weathercocks are gilt some thrice a year,  
 If that the *summer* is not too severe:

I say that I can tell — 'twas half a minute;  
 I know the solar beams take up more time  
 Ere, pack'd up for their journey, they begin it;  
 But then their telegraph is less sublime,  
 And if they ran a race, they would not win it  
 'Gainst Satan's courier's bound for their own clime.  
 The sun takes up some years for every ray  
 To reach its goal — the devil not half a day.

Upon the verge of space, about the size  
 Of half-a-crown, a little speck appear'd  
 (I've seen a something like it in the skies  
 In the Ægean, ere a squall); it near'd,

And, growing bigger, took another guise;  
 Like an aerial ship it tack'd, and steer'd,  
 Or *was* steer'd (I am doubtful of the  
 grammar  
 Of the last phrase, which makes the  
 stanza stammer;—

But take your choice): and then it grew  
 a cloud  
 And so it was—a cloud of witnesses.  
 But such a cloud! No land e'er saw a  
 crowd  
 Of locusts numerous as the heavens  
 saw these;  
 They shadowed with their myriads space;  
 their loud  
 And varied cries were like those of  
 wild geese  
 (If nations may be liken'd to a goose),  
 And realized the phrase of "hell broke  
 loose."

Here crashed a sturdy oath of stout John  
 Bull,  
 Who damned away his eyes as hereto-  
 fore:  
 There Paddy brogued "By Jasus!"—  
 "What's your wull?"  
 The temperate Scot exclaimed: the  
 French ghost swore  
 In certain terms I shan't translate in full,  
 As the first coachman will; and 'midst  
 the war,  
 The voice of Jonathan was heard to ex-  
 press,  
 "Our president is going to war, I guess."

Besides there were the Spaniard, Dutch,  
 and Dane;  
 In short, an universal shoal of shades,  
 From Otaheite's isle to Salisbury Plain,  
 Of all climes and professions, years and  
 trades,  
 Ready to swear against the good king's  
 reign,  
 Bitter as clubs in cards are against  
 spades:  
 All summon'd by this grand "subpœna,"  
 to  
 Try if kings mayn't be damn'd like me  
 or you.

When Michael saw this host, he first  
 grew pale,  
 As angels can; next, like Italian twi-  
 light,

He turn'd all colors—as a peacock's tail,  
 Or sunset streaming through a Gothic  
 skylight  
 In some old abbey, or a trout not stale,  
 Or distant lightning on the horizon *by*  
 night,  
 Or a fresh rainbow, or a grand review  
 Of thirty regiments in red, green, and  
 blue.

Then he address'd himself to Satan:  
 "Why—  
 My good old friend, for such I deem  
 you, though  
 Our different parties make us fight so  
 shy,  
 I ne'er mistake you for a *personal* foe;  
 Our difference is *political*, and I  
 Trust that, whatever may occur below,  
 You know my great respect for you: and  
 this  
 Makes me regret whate'er you do amiss—

"Why, my dear Lucifer, would you abuse  
 My call for witnesses? I did not  
 mean  
 That you should half of earth and hell  
 produce;  
 'Tis even superfluous, since two honest,  
 clean,  
 True testimonies are enough: we lose  
 Our time, nay, our eternity, between  
 The accusation and defence: if we  
 Hear both, 'twill stretch our immortal-  
 ity."

Satan replied, "To me the matter is  
 Indifferent, in a personal point of  
 view:  
 I can have fifty better souls than this  
 With far less trouble than we have gone  
 through  
 Already; and I merely argued his  
 Late Majesty of Britain's case with  
 you  
 Upon a point of form: you may dispose  
 Of him; I've kings enough below, God  
 knows!"

Thus spoke the Demon (late call'd  
 "multi-faced")  
 By multo-scribbling Southey). "Then  
 we'll call  
 One or two persons of the myriads placed  
 Around our congress, and dispense with  
 all

The rest," quoth Michael: "Who may be  
so graced  
As to speak first? there's choice enough  
— who shall  
It be?" Then Satan answer'd, "There  
are many;  
But you may choose Jack Wilkes as well  
as any."

A merry, cock-eyed, curious-looking sprite  
Upon the instant started from the  
throng,  
Dress'd in a fashion now forgotten quite;  
For all the fashions of the flesh stick  
long  
By people in the next world; where unite  
All the costumes since Adam's, right  
or wrong,  
From Eve's fig-leaf down to the petticoat,  
Almost as scanty, of days less remote.

The spirit look'd around upon the crowds  
Assembled, and exclaim'd, "My friends  
of all

The spheres, we shall catch cold amongst  
these clouds;

So let's to business: why this general  
call?

If those are freeholders I see in shrouds,  
And 'tis for an election that they bawl,  
Behold a candidate with unturn'd coat!  
Saint Peter, may I count upon your  
vote?"

"Sir," replied Michael, "you mistake;  
these things

Are of a former life, and what we do  
Above is more august; to judge of kings  
Is the tribunal met: so now you know."

"Then I presume those gentlemen with  
wings,"

Said Wilkes, "are cherubs; and that  
soul below

Looks much like George the Third, but  
to my mind

A good deal older — Bless me! is he  
blind?"

"He is what you behold him, and his  
doom

Depends upon his deeds," the Angel  
said;

"If you have aught to arraign in him,  
the tomb

Gives license to the humblest beggar's  
head

To lift itself against the loftiest." —  
"Some,"

Said Wilkes, "don't wait to see them  
laid in lead,

For such a liberty — and I, for one,  
Have told them what I thought beneath  
the sun."

"Above the sun repeat, then, what thou  
hast

To urge against him," said the Arch-  
angel. "Why,"

Replied the spirit, "since old scores are  
past,

Must I turn evidence? In faith, not I.  
Besides, I beat him hollow at the last,

With all his Lords and Commons: in  
the sky

I don't like ripping up old stories, since  
His conduct was but natural in a prince.

"Foolish, no doubt, and wicked, to  
oppress

A poor unlucky devil without a shilling;  
But then I blame the man himself much  
less

Than Bute and Grafton, and shall be  
unwilling

To see him punish'd here for their excess,  
Since they were both damn'd long ago,  
and still in

Their place below: for me, I have for-  
given,

And vote his 'habeas corpus' into  
heaven."

"Wilkes," said the Devil, "I understand  
all this;

You turn'd to half a courtier ere you  
died,

And seem to think it would not be amiss  
To grow a whole one on the other side

Of Charon's ferry; you forget that *his*  
Reign is concluded; whatsoe'er betide,  
He won't be sovereign more: you've lost  
your labor,

For at the best he will but be your neigh-  
bor.

"However, I knew what to think of it,  
When I beheld you in your jesting way,  
Flitting and whispering round about the  
spit

Where Belial, upon duty for the day,  
With Fox's lard was basting William Pitt,  
His pupil; I knew what to think, I say:

That fellow even in hell breeds farther  
ills;  
I'll have him *gagg'd* — 'twas one of his  
own bills.

"Call Junius!" From the crowd a  
shadow stalk'd,  
And at the name there was a general  
squeeze,  
So that the very ghosts no longer walk'd  
In comfort, at their own aerial ease,  
But were all ramm'd, and jamm'd (but  
to be balk'd,  
As we shall see), and jostled hands  
and knees,  
Like wind compress'd and pent within a  
bladder,  
Or like a human colic, which is sadder.

The shadow came — a tall, thin, gray-  
hair'd figure,  
That look'd as it had been a shade on  
earth;  
Quick in its motions, with an air of  
vigor,  
But naught to mark its breeding or its  
birth;  
Now it wax'd little, then again grew  
bigger,  
With now an air of gloom, or savage  
mirth;  
But as you gazed upon its features, they  
Changed every instant — to *what*, none  
could say.

The more intently the ghosts gazed, the  
less  
Could they distinguish whose the  
features were;  
The Devil himself seem'd puzzled even  
to guess;  
They varied like a dream — now here,  
now there;  
And several people swore from out the  
press,  
They knew him perfectly; and one  
could swear  
He was his father; upon which another  
Was sure he was his mother's cousin's  
brother:

Another, that he was a duke, or knight,  
An orator, a lawyer, or a priest,  
A nabob, a man-midwife; but the wight  
Mysterious changed his countenance  
at least

As oft as they their minds; though in  
full sight

He stood, the puzzle only was in-  
creased;

The man was a phantasmagoria in  
Himself — he was so volatile and thin.

The moment that you had pronounced  
him *one*,

Presto! his face changed, and he was  
another;

And when that change was hardly well  
put on,

It varied, till I don't think his own  
mother

(If that he had a mother) would her son  
Have known, he shifted so from one to  
t'other;

Till guessing from a pleasure grew a task,  
At this epistolary "Iron Mask."

For sometimes he like Cerberus would  
seem —

"Three gentlemen at once" (as sagely  
says

Good Mrs. Malaprop); then you might  
deem

That he was not *one*; now many rays  
Were flashing round him; and now a  
thick steam

Hid him from sight — like fogs on Lon-  
don days:

Now Burke, now Tooke, he grew to  
people's fancies,

And certes often like Sir Philip Francis.

I've an hypothesis — 'tis quite my own;  
I never let it out till now, for fear  
Of doing people harm about the throne,  
And injuring some minister or peer,  
On whom the stigma might perhaps be  
blown;

It is — my gentle public, lend thine ear!  
'Tis that what Junius we are wont to call  
Was *really, truly*, nobody at all.

I don't see wherefore letters should not  
be

Written without hands, since we daily  
view

Them written without heads; and books,  
we see,

Are fill'd as well without the latter too:  
And really till we fix on somebody

For certain sure to claim them as his  
due,

Their author, like the Niger's mouth,  
will bother  
The world to say if *there* be mouth or  
author.

"And who and what art thou?" the  
Archangel said.

"For *that* you may consult my title-  
page,"

Replied this mighty shadow of a shade:  
"If I have kept my secret half an age,  
I scarce shall tell it now." — "Canst thou  
upbraid,"

Continued Michael, "George Rex, or  
allege

Aught further?" Junius answer'd, "You  
had better

First ask him for *his* answer to my letter:

"My charges upon record will outlast  
The brass of both his epitaph and  
tomb."

"Repent'st thou not," said Michael, "of  
some past

Exaggeration? something which may  
doom

Thyself if false, as him if true? Thou  
wast

Too bitter — is it not so? — in thy  
gloom

Of passion?" — "Passion!" cried the  
phantom dim,

"I loved my country, and I hated him.

"What I have written, I have written:  
let

The rest be on his head or mine!" so  
spoke

Old "Nominis Umbra"; and while  
speaking yet,

Away he melted in celestial smoke.

Then Satan said to Michael, "Don't  
forget

To call George Washington, and John  
Horne Tooke,

And Franklin;" — but at this time there  
was heard

A cry for room, though not a phantom  
stirr'd.

At length with jostling, elbowing, and  
the aid

Of cherubim appointed to that post,  
The devil Asmodeus to the circle made

His way, and look'd as if his journey  
cost

Some trouble. When his burden down  
he laid,

"What's this?" cried Michael; "why,  
'tis not a ghost?"

"I know it," quoth the incubus; "but he  
Shall be one, if you leave the affair to me.

"Confound the renegado! I have sprain'd  
My left wing, he's so heavy; one would  
think

Some of his works about his neck were  
chain'd.

But to the point; while hovering o'er  
the brink

Of Skiddaw (where as usual it still rain'd),  
I saw a taper, far below me, wink,

And stooping, caught this fellow at a  
libel —

No less on history than the Holy Bible.

"The former is the devil's scripture, and  
The latter yours, good Michael: so the  
affair

Belongs to all of us, you understand.

I snatch'd him up just as you see him  
there,

And brought him off for sentence out of  
hand:

I've scarcely been ten minutes in the  
air —

At least a quarter it can hardly be:  
I dare say that his wife is still at tea."

Here Satan said, "I know this man of  
old,

And have expected him for some time  
here;

A sillier fellow you will scarce behold,

Or more conceited in his petty sphere:

But surely it was not worth while to fold

Such trash below your wing, As-  
modeus dear:

We had the poor wretch safe (without  
being bored

With carriage) coming of his own accord.

"But since he's here, let's see what he  
has done."

"Done!" cried Asmodeus, "he antici-  
pates

The very business you are now upon,  
And scribbles as if head clerk to the  
Fates.

Who knows to what his ribaldry may run,  
When such an ass as this, like Balaam's,

prates?"



"Let's hear," quoth Michael, "what he has to say :  
You know we're bound to that in every way."

Now the bard, glad to get an audience, which

By no means often was his case below,  
Began to cough, and hawk, and hem, and pitch

His voice into that awful note of woe  
To all unhappy hearers within reach

Of poets when the tide of rhyme's in flow ;

But stuck fast with his first hexameter,  
Not one of all whose gouty feet would stir.

But ere the spavin'd dactyls could be spurr'd

Into recitative, in great dismay  
Both cherubim and seraphim were heard  
To murmur loudly through their long array ;

And Michael rose ere he could get a word  
Of all his founder'd verses under way,  
And cried, "For God's sake stop, my friend ! 'twere best —

*Non Di, non homines* — you know the rest."

A general bustle spread throughout the throng,

Which seem'd to hold all verse in detestation :

The angels had of course enough of song  
When upon service ; and the generation  
Of ghosts had heard too much in life, not long

Before, to profit by a new occasion :  
The monarch, mute till then, exclaim'd,  
"What ! what !

*Pye* come again ? No more — no more of that !"

The tumult grew ; an universal cough  
Convulsed the skies, as during a debate,  
When Castlereagh has been up long enough

(Before he was first minister of state,  
I mean — the *slaves hear now*) ; some  
cried "Off, off !"

As at a farce ; till, grown quite desperate,

The bard Saint Peter pray'd to interpose  
(Himself an author) only for his pose.

The varlet was not an ill-favor'd knave ;  
A good deal like a vulture in the face,  
With a hook nose and a hawk's eye, which gave

A smart and sharper-looking sort of grace

To his whole aspect, which, though rather grave,

Was by no means so ugly as his case ;  
But that, indeed, was hopeless as can be,  
Quite a poetic felony "*de se*."

Then Michael blew his trump, and still'd the noise

With one still greater, as is yet the mode

On earth besides ; except some grumbling voice,

Which now and then will make a slight inroad

Upon decorous silence, few will twice

Lift up their lungs when fairly over-crow'd ;

And now the bard could plead his own bad cause,

With all the attitudes of self-applause.

He said — (I only give the heads) — he said,

He meant no harm in scribbling ; 'twas his way

Upon all topics ; 'twas, besides, his bread,  
Of which he butter'd both sides ;

'twould delay

Too long the assembly (he was pleased to dread),

And take up rather more time than a day,

To name his works — he would but cite a few —

"Wat Tyler" — "Rhymes on Blenheim" — "Waterloo."

He had written praises of a regicide ;

He had written praises of all kings whatever ;

He had written for republics far and wide,

And then against them bitterer than ever ;

For pantisocracy he once had cried  
Aloud, a scheme less moral than 'twas clever ;

Then grew a hearty anti-Jacobin —  
Had turn'd his coat — and would have turn'd his skin.

He had sung against all battles, and again  
In their high praise and glory; he had  
call'd

Reviewing "the ungentle craft," and then  
Become as base a critic as e'er  
crawl'd —

Fed, paid, and pamper'd by the very men  
By whom his muse and morals had  
been maul'd:

He had written much blank verse, and  
blanker prose,  
And more of both than anybody knows.

He had written Wesley's life: here  
turning round

To Satan, "Sir, I'm ready to write  
yours,

In two octavo volumes, nicely bound,  
With notes and preface, all that most  
allures

The pious purchaser; and there's no  
ground

For fear, for I can choose my own re-  
viewers:

So let me have the proper documents,  
That I may add you to my other saints."

Satan bow'd, and was silent. "Well,  
if you,

With amiable modesty, decline

My offer, what says Michael? There  
are few

Whose memoirs could be render'd more  
divine.

Mine is a pen of all work; not so new

As it was once, but I would make you  
shine

Like your own trumpet. By the way,  
my own

Has more of brass in it, and is as well  
blown.

"But talking about trumpets, here's my  
'Vision'!

Now you shall judge, all people; yes,  
you shall

Judge with my judgment, and by my  
decision

Be guided who shall enter heaven or  
fall.

I settle all these things by intuition,

Times present, past, to come, heaven,  
hell, and all,

Like King Alfonso. When I thus see  
double,

I save the Deity some worlds of trouble."

He ceased, and drew forth an MS.; and  
no

Persuasion on the part of devils, saints,  
Or angels, now could stop the torrent;  
so

He read the first three lines of the  
contents;

But at the fourth, the whole spiritual  
show

Had vanish'd, with variety of scents,  
Ambrosial and sulphureous, as they  
sprang,

Like lightning, off from his "melodious  
twang."

Those grand heroics acted as a spell:

The angels stopp'd their ears and plied  
their pinions;

The devils ran howling, deafen'd, down  
to hell;

The ghosts fled, gibbering, for their  
own dominions —

(For 'tis not yet decided where they  
dwell,

And I leave every man to his opinions);  
Michael took refuge in his trump — but,

lo!

His teeth were set on edge, he could not  
blow!

Saint Peter, who has hitherto been known  
For an impetuous saint, upraised his  
keys,

And at the fifth line knock'd the poet  
down;

Who fell like Phaëton, but more at ease,  
Into his lake, for there he did not drown;

A different web being by the Destinies  
Woven for the Laureate's final wreath,

whene'er

Reform shall happen either here or there.

He first sank to the bottom — like his  
works,

But soon rose to the surface — like him-  
self;

For all corrupted things are buoy'd like  
corks,

By their own rottenness, like as an elf,  
Or wisp that flits o'er a morass: he lurks,

It may be, still, like dull books on a  
shelf,

In his own den, to scrawl some "Life"  
or "Vision,"

As Welborn says — "the devil turn'd pre-  
cision."

As for the rest, to come to the conclusion  
Of this true dream, the telescope is gone  
Which kept my optics free from all  
delusion,

And show'd me what I in my turn have  
shown;

All I saw farther, in the last confusion,  
Was, that King George slipp'd into  
heaven for one;

And when the tumult dwindled to a calm,  
I left him practising the hundredth psalm.

*May 7 — October 4, 1821.*

October 15, 1822.

### IMPROMPTUS<sup>1</sup>

STRAHAN, Tonson, Lintot of the times,  
Patron and publisher of rhymes,

For thee the bard up Pindus climbs,  
My Murray.

To thee, with hope and terror dumb,  
The unfledged MS. authors come;  
Thou printest all — and sellest some —

My Murray.

Upon thy table's baize so green  
The last new Quarterly is seen, —  
But where is thy new Magazine,

My Murray?

Along thy sprucest bookshelves shine  
The works thou deemest most divine —  
The "Art of Cookery," and mine,

My Murray.

Tours, Travels, Essays, too, I wist,  
And Sermons, to thy mill bring grist;  
And then thou hast the "Navy List,"

My Murray.

And Heaven forbid I should conclude  
Without "the Board of Longitude,"  
Although this narrow paper would,

My Murray.

*April 11, 1818. 1830.*

WHEN a man hath no freedom to fight  
for at home,

Let him combat for that of his neigh-  
bors;

Let him think of the glories of Greece and  
of Rome,

And get knock'd on the head for his  
labors.

<sup>1</sup> From letters addressed to Mr. Murray, or to Thomas Moore.

To do good to mankind is the chivalrous  
plan,

And is always as nobly required;  
Then battle for freedom wherever you can,  
And, if not shot or hang'd, you'll get  
knighted.

*November 5, 1820. 1824.*

So we'll go no more roving  
So late into the night,  
Though the heart be still as loving,  
And the moon be still as bright.

For the sword outwears its sheath,  
And the soul wears out the breast,  
And the heart must pause to breathe,  
And love itself have rest.

Though the night was made for loving,  
And the day returns too soon,  
Yet we'll go no more a roving  
By the light of the moon.

*February 28, 1817. 1830.*

THE world is a bundle of hay,  
Mankind are the asses who pull;  
Each tugs in a different way,  
And the greatest of all is John Bull.

*November 5, 1820. 1830.*

WHO kill'd John Keats?  
"I," says the Quarterly,<sup>1</sup>  
So savage and Tartarly;  
"Twas one of my feats."

Who shot the arrow?  
"The poet-priest Milman  
(So ready to kill man),  
Or Southey, or Barrow."

*July 30, 1821. 1830.*

FOR Orford and for Waldegrave  
You give much more than me you gave;  
Which is not fairly to behave,

My Murray.

Because if a live dog, 'tis said,  
Be worth a lion fairly sped,  
A *live lord* must be worth *two* dead,

My Murray.

And if, as the opinion goes,  
Verse hath a better sale than prose, —  
Certes, I should have more than those,  
My Murray.

<sup>1</sup> See the note on page 228.



# SHELLEY

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# SHELLEY

## STANZAS — APRIL 1814<sup>1</sup>

AWAY! the moor is dark beneath the  
moon,  
Rapid clouds have drank the last pale  
beam of even:  
Away! the gathering winds will call the  
darkness soon,  
And profoundest midnight shroud the  
serene lights of heaven.

Pause not! The time is past! Every  
voice cries, Away!  
Tempt not with one last tear thy  
friend's ungentle mood:  
Thy lover's eye, so glazed and cold, dares  
not entreat thy stay:  
Duty and dereliction guide thee back  
to solitude.

Away, away! to thy sad and silent home;  
Pour bitter tears on its desolated  
hearth;  
Watch the dim shades as like ghosts they  
go and come,  
And complicate strange webs of mel-  
ancholy mirth.

The leaves of wasted autumn woods  
shall float around thine head:  
The blooms of dewy spring shall gleam  
beneath thy feet:  
But thy soul or this world must fade in  
the frost that binds the dead,  
Ere midnight's frown and morning's  
smile, ere thou and peace may  
meet.

The cloud shadows of midnight possess  
their own repose,  
For the weary winds are silent, or the  
moon is in the deep:  
Some respite to its turbulence unresting  
ocean knows;  
Whatever moves, or toils, or grieves,  
hath its appointed sleep.

<sup>1</sup> See Dowden's *Life of Shelley*, I, 104-11.

Thou in the grave shalt rest — yet till  
the phantoms flee  
Which that house and heath and gar-  
den made dear to thee erewhile,  
Thy remembrance, and repentance, and  
deep musings are not free  
From the music of two voices and the  
light of one sweet smile.  
1814, 1816.

## TO COLERIDGE<sup>1</sup>

ΔΑΚΡΥΣΙ ΔΙΟΙΣΩ ΠΟΤΜΟΝ 'ΑΠΟΤΜΟΝ

OH! there are spirits of the air,  
And genii of the evening breeze,  
And gentle ghosts, with eyes as fair  
As star-beams among twilight trees: —  
Such lovely ministers to meet  
Of hast thou turned from men thy  
lonely feet.

With mountain winds, and babbling  
springs,  
And moonlight seas, that are the voice  
Of these inexplicable things,  
Thou didst hold commune, and rejoice  
When they did answer thee; but they  
Cast, like a worthless boon, thy love away.

And thou hast sought in starry eyes  
Beams that were never meant for  
thine,  
Another's wealth: — tame sacrifice  
To a fond faith! still dost thou pine?  
Still dost thou hope that greeting hands,  
Voice, looks, or lips, may answer thy  
demands?

<sup>1</sup> The poem beginning "Oh, there are spirits in the air" was addressed in idea to Coleridge, whom he never knew, and at whose character he could only guess imperfectly, through his writings, and accounts he heard of him from some who knew him well. He regarded his change of opinions as rather an act of will than conviction, and believed that in his inner heart he would be haunted by what Shelley considered the better and holier aspirations of his youth. (From Mrs. Shelley's *Note on the Early Poems*.) See also Dowden's *Life of Shelley*, I, 472, and note.

Ah! wherefore didst thou build thine hope

On the false earth's inconstancy?  
Did thine own mind afford no scope  
Of love, or moving thoughts to thee?  
That natural scenes or human smiles  
Could steal the power to wind thee in  
their wiles.

Yes, all the faithless smiles are fled  
Whose falsehood left thee broken-  
hearted;  
The glory of the moon is dead;  
Night's ghosts and dreams have now  
departed;  
Thine own soul still is true to thee,  
But changed to a foul fiend through  
misery.

This fiend, whose ghastly presence ever  
Beside thee like thy shadow hangs,  
Dream not to chase;—the mad en-  
deavor  
Would scourge thee to severer pangs.  
Be as thou art. Thy settled fate,  
Dark as it is, all change would aggravate.  
1815. 1816.

## ALASTOR

OR

### THE SPIRIT OF SOLITUDE

#### PREFACE

The poem entitled *Alastor* may be considered as allegorical of one of the most interesting situations of the human mind. It represents a youth of uncorrupted feelings and adventurous genius led forth by an imagination inflamed and purified through familiarity with all that is excellent and majestic, to the contemplation of the universe. He drinks deep of the fountains of knowledge, and is still insatiate. The magnificence and beauty of the external world sinks profoundly into the frame of his conceptions, and affords to their modifications a variety not to be exhausted. So long as it is possible for his desires to point towards objects thus infinite and unmeasured, he is joyous, and tranquil, and self-possessed. But the period arrives when these objects cease to suffice. His mind is at length suddenly awakened and thirsts for intercourse with an intelligence similar to itself. He images to himself the Being whom he loves. Conversant with speculations of the sublimest and most perfect natures, the vision in which he embodies his own imaginations unites all of wonderful, or wise, or beautiful, which the poet, the philosopher, or the lover could depicture. The intellectual faculties, the imagination, the functions of sense, have their respective requisitions on the sympathy of corresponding powers in other human beings. The poet is represented as uniting these requisitions, and attaching them to a single image. He

seeks in vain for a prototype of his conception. Blasted by his disappointment, he descends to an untimely grave.

The picture is not barren of instruction to actual men. The Poet's self-centred seclusion was avenged by the furies of an irresistible passion pursuing him to speedy ruin. But that Power which strikes the luminaries of the world with sudden darkness and extinction, by awakening them to too exquisite a perception of its influences, dooms to a slow and poisonous decay those meaner spirits that dare to abjure its dominion. Their destiny is more abject and inglorious as their delinquency is more contemptible and pernicious. They who, deluded by no generous error, instigated by no sacred thirst of doubtful knowledge, duped by no illustrious superstition, loving nothing on this earth, and cherishing no hopes beyond, yet keep aloof from sympathies with their kind, rejoicing neither in human joy nor mourning with human grief; these, and such as they, have their apportioned curse. They languish, because none feel with them their common nature. They are morally dead. They are neither friends, nor lovers, nor fathers, nor citizens of the world, nor benefactors of their country. Among those who attempt to exist without human sympathy, the pure and tenderhearted perish through the intensity and passion of their search after its communities, when the vacancy of their spirit suddenly makes itself felt. All else, selfish, blind, and torpid, are those unforeseeing multitudes who constitute, together with their own, the lasting misery and loneliness of the world. Those who love not their fellow-beings live unfruitful lives, and prepare for their old age a miserable grave.

"The good die first,  
And those whose hearts are dry as summer dust,  
Burn to the socket!"

December 14, 1815.

Nondum amabam, et amare amabam, quærebam quid amarem, amans amare. — *Confess. St. August.*

EARTH, ocean, air, beloved brotherhood!  
If our great Mother has imbued my soul  
With aught of natural piety to feel  
Your love, and recompense the boon with  
mine;  
If dewy morn, and odorous noon, and  
even,  
With sunset and its gorgeous ministers,  
And solemn midnight tingling silent-  
ness;  
If autumn's hollow sighs in the sere wood,  
And winter robing with pure snow and  
crowns  
Of starry ice the gray grass and bare  
boughs;  
If spring's voluptuous pantings when she  
breathes  
Her first sweet kisses, have been dear to  
me;  
If no bright bird, insect, or gentle beast  
I consciously have injured, but still loved



And cherished these my kindred; then  
 forgive  
 This boast, belovèd brethren, and with-  
 draw  
 No portion of your wonted favor now!

Mother of this unfathomable world!  
 Favor my solemn song, for I have loved  
 Thee ever, and thee only; I have watched  
 Thy shadow, and the darkness of thy  
 steps,  
 And my heart ever gazes on the depth  
 Of thy deep mysteries. I have made my  
 bed  
 In charnels and on coffins, where black  
 death  
 Keeps record of the trophies won from  
 thee,  
 Hoping to still these obstinate question-  
 ings  
 Of thee and thine, by forcing some lone  
 ghost,  
 Thy messenger, to render up the tale  
 Of what we are. In lone and silent hours,  
 When night makes a weird sound of its  
 own stillness,  
 Like an inspired and desperate alchymist  
 Staking his very life on some dark hope,  
 Have I mixed awful talk and asking looks  
 With my most innocent love, until strange  
 tears  
 Uniting with those breathless kisses, made  
 Such magic as compels the charmed night  
 To render up thy charge: . . . and,  
 though ne'er yet  
 Thou hast unveiled thy inmost sanctuary,  
 Enough from incommunicable dream,  
 And twilight phantasms, and deep noon-  
 day thought,  
 Has shone within me, that serenely now  
 And moveless, as a long-forgotten lyre  
 Suspended in the solitary dome  
 Of some mysterious and deserted fane,  
 I wait thy breath, Great Parent, that  
 my strain  
 May modulate with murmurs of the air,  
 And motions of the forests and the sea,  
 And voice of living beings, and woven  
 hymns  
 Of night and day, and the deep heart of  
 man.

There was a Poet whose untimely  
 tomb  
 No human hands with pious reverence  
 reared,

But the charmed eddies of autumnal  
 winds  
 Built o'er his mouldering bones a pyra-  
 mid  
 Of mouldering leaves in the waste wilder-  
 ness:—  
 A lovely youth, — no mourning maiden  
 decked  
 With weeping flowers, or votive cypress  
 wreath,  
 The lone couch of his everlasting sleep:—  
 Gentle, and brave, and generous, — no  
 lorn bard  
 Breathed o'er his dark fate one melodious  
 sigh:  
 He lived, he died, he sung, in solitude.  
 Strangers have wept to hear his passion-  
 ate notes,  
 And virgins, as unknown he passed, have  
 pined  
 And wasted for fond love of his wild  
 eyes.  
 The fire of those soft orbs has ceased to  
 burn,  
 And Silence, too enamored of that voice,  
 Locks its mute music in her rugged cell.

By solemn vision, and bright silver  
 dream,  
 His infancy was nurtured. Every sight  
 And sound from the vast earth and  
 ambient air  
 Sent to his heart its choicest impulses,  
 The fountains of divine philosophy  
 Fled not his thirsting lips, and all of great,  
 Or good, or lovely, which the sacred past  
 In truth or fable consecrates, he felt  
 And knew. When early youth had  
 pass'd, he left  
 His cold fireside and alienated home  
 To seek strange truths in undiscovered  
 lands.  
 Many a wide waste and tangled wilder-  
 ness  
 Has lured his fearless steps; and he has  
 bought  
 With his sweet voice and eyes, from  
 savage men,  
 His rest and food. Nature's most secret  
 steps  
 He like her shadow has pursued, where'er  
 The red volcano overcanopies  
 Its fields of snow and pinnacles of ice  
 With burning smoke, or where bitumen  
 lakes  
 On black bare pointed islets ever beat



With sluggish surge, or where the secret  
caves  
Rugged and dark, winding among the  
springs  
Of fire and poison, inaccessible  
To avarice or pride, their starry domes  
Of diamond and of gold expand above  
Numberless and immeasurable halls,  
Frequent with crystal column, and clear  
shrines  
Of pearl, and thrones radiant with chrysolite.  
Nor had that scene of ampler majesty  
Than gems or gold, the varying roof of  
heaven  
And the green earth lost in his heart its  
claims  
To love and wonder; he would linger long  
In lonesome vales, making the wild his  
home,  
Until the doves and squirrels would  
partake  
From his innocuous hand his bloodless  
food,  
Lured by the gentle meaning of his looks,  
And the wild antelope, that starts when-  
e'er  
The dry leaf rustles in the brake, suspend  
Her timid steps to gaze upon a form  
More graceful than her own.  
His wandering step  
Obedient to high thoughts, has visited  
The awful ruins of the days of old:  
Athens, and Tyre, and Balbec, and the  
waste  
Where stood Jerusalem, the fallen towers  
Of Babylon, the eternal pyramids,  
Memphis and Thebes, and whatsoe'er of  
strange  
Sculptured on alabaster obelisk,  
Or jasper tomb, or mutilated sphynx,  
Dark Æthiopia in her desert hills  
Conceals. Among the ruined temples  
there,  
Stupendous columns, and wild images  
Of more than man, where marble demons  
watch  
The Zodiac's brazen mystery, and dead  
men  
Hang their mute thoughts on the mute  
walls around,  
He lingered, poring on memorials  
Of the world's youth, through the long  
burning day  
Gazed on those speechless shapes, nor,  
when the moon

Filled the mysterious halls with floating  
shades  
Suspended he that task, but ever gazed  
And gazed, till meaning on his vacant  
mind  
Flashed like strong inspiration, and he  
saw  
The thrilling secrets of the birth of time.

Meanwhile an Arab maiden brought his  
food,  
Her daily portion, from her father's tent,  
And spread her matting for his couch,  
and stole  
From duties and repose to tend his  
steps:—  
Enamored, yet not daring for deep awe  
To speak her love:—and watched his  
nightly sleep,  
Sleepless herself, to gaze upon his lips  
Parted in slumber, whence the regular  
breath  
Of innocent dreams arose: then, when  
red morn  
Made paler the pale moon, to her cold  
home  
Wildered, and wan, and panting, she  
returned.

The Poet wandering on, through  
Arabie  
And Persia, and the wild Carmanian  
waste,  
And o'er the ærial mountains which pour  
down  
Indus and Oxus from their icy caves,  
In joy and exultation held his way;  
Till in the vale of Cashmire, far within  
Its loneliest dell, where odorous plants  
entwine  
Beneath the hollow rocks a natural bower,  
Beside a sparkling rivulet he stretched  
His languid limbs. A vision on his sleep  
There came, a dream of hopes that never  
yet  
Had flushed his cheek. He dreamed a  
a veiled maid  
Sate near him, talking in low solemn  
tones.  
Her voice was like the voice of his own  
soul  
Heard in the calm of thought; its music  
long,  
Like woven sounds of streams and  
breezes, held  
His inmost sense suspended in its web

Of many-colored woof and shifting hues.  
 Knowledge and truth and virtue were her  
 theme,  
 And lofty hopes of divine liberty,  
 Thoughts the most dear to him, and  
 poesy,  
 Herself a poet. Soon the solemn mood  
 Of her pure mind kindled through all her  
 frame  
 A permeating fire: wild numbers then  
 She raised, with voice stifled in tremulous  
 sobs  
 Subdued by its own pathos: her fair  
 hands  
 Were bare alone, sweeping from some  
 strange harp  
 Strange symphony, and in their branch-  
 ing veins  
 The eloquent blood told an ineffable tale.  
 The beating of her heart was heard to fill  
 The pauses of her music, and her breath  
 Tumultuously accorded with those fits  
 Of intermitted song. Sudden she rose,  
 As if her heart impatiently endured  
 Its bursting burthen: at the sound he  
 turned,  
 And saw by the warm light of their own  
 life  
 Her glowing limbs beneath the sinuous  
 veil  
 Of woven wind, her outspread arms now  
 bare,  
 Her dark locks floating in the breath of  
 night,  
 Her beamy bending eyes, her parted lips  
 Outstretched, and pale, and quivering  
 eagerly.  
 His strong heart sunk and sickened with  
 excess  
 Of love. He reared his shuddering limbs  
 and quelled  
 His gasping breath, and spread his arms  
 to meet  
 Her panting bosom: . . . she drew back  
 a while,  
 Then, yielding to the irresistible joy,  
 With frantic gesture and short breathless  
 cry  
 Folded his frame in her dissolving arms.  
 Now blackness veiled his dizzy eyes, and  
 night  
 Involved and swallowed up the vision;  
 sleep,  
 Like a dark flood suspended in its course,  
 Rolled back its impulse on his vacant  
 brain.

Roused by the shock he started from his  
 trance —  
 The cold white light of morning, the blue  
 moon  
 Low in the west, the clear and garish hills,  
 The distinct valley and the vacant woods,  
 Spread round him where he stood.  
 Whither have fled  
 The hues of heaven that canopied his  
 bower  
 Of yesternight? The sounds that  
 soothed his sleep,  
 The mystery and the majesty of Earth,  
 The joy, the exultation? His wan eyes  
 Gaze on the empty scene as vacantly  
 As ocean's moon looks on the moon in  
 heaven.  
 The spirit of sweet human love has sent  
 A vision to the sleep of him who spurned  
 Her choicest gifts. He eagerly pursues  
 Beyond the realms of dream that fleeting  
 shade;  
 He overleaps the bounds. Alas! alas!  
 Were limbs, and breath, and being inter-  
 twined  
 Thus treacherously? Lost, lost, for ever  
 lost,  
 In the wide pathless desert of dim sleep  
 That beautiful shape! Does the dark  
 gate of death  
 Conduct to thy mysterious paradise,  
 O Sleep? Does the bright arch of rain-  
 bow clouds,  
 And pendent mountains seen in the calm  
 lake,  
 Lead only to a black and watery depth,  
 While death's blue vault, with loathliest  
 vapors hung,  
 Where every shade which the foul grave  
 exhales  
 Hides its dead eye from the detested day,  
 Conduct, O Sleep, to thy delightful  
 realms?  
 This doubt with sudden tide flowed on his  
 heart;  
 The insatiate hope which it awakened  
 stung  
 His brain even like despair.  
 While daylight held  
 The sky, the Poet kept mute conference  
 With his still soul. At night the passion  
 came,  
 Like the fierce fiend of a distempered  
 dream  
 And shook him from his rest, and led  
 him forth

Into the darkness. — As an eagle, grasped  
 In folds of the green serpent, feels her  
 breast  
 Burn with the poison, and precipitates  
 Through night and day, tempest, and  
 calm, and cloud,  
 Frantic with dizzying anguish, her blind  
 flight  
 O'er the wide æry wilderness: thus  
 driven  
 By the bright shadow of that lovely  
 dream,  
 Beneath the cold glare of the desolate  
 night,  
 Through tangled swamps and deep pre-  
 cipitous dells,  
 Startling with careless step the moonlight  
 snake,  
 He fled. Red morning dawned upon his  
 flight,  
 Shedding the mockery of its vital hues  
 Upon his cheek of death. He wandered  
 on  
 Till vast Aornos seen from Petra's steep,  
 Hung o'er the low horizon like a cloud;  
 Through Balk, and where the desolated  
 tombs  
 Of Parthian kings scatter to every wind  
 Their wasting dust, wildly he wandered  
 on,  
 Day after day, a weary waste of hours,  
 Bearing within his life the brooding care  
 That ever fed on its decaying flame.  
 And not his limbs were lean; his scat-  
 tered hair  
 Sere'd by the autumn of strange suffering  
 Sung dirges in the wind; his listless hand  
 Hung like dead bone within its withered  
 skin;  
 Life, and the lustre that consumed it,  
 shone  
 As in a furnace burning secretly  
 From his dark eyes alone. The cottagers,  
 Who ministered with human charity  
 His human wants, beheld with wondering  
 awe  
 Their fleeting visitant. The mountain-  
 eer,  
 Encountering on some dizzy precipice  
 That spectral form, deemed that the  
 Spirit of wind  
 With lightning eyes, and eager breath,  
 and feet  
 Disturbing not the drifted snow, had  
 paused  
 In its career: the infant would conceal

His troubled visage in his mother's robe  
 In terror at the glare of those wild eyes,  
 To remember their strange light in many  
 a dream  
 Of after-times; but youthful maidens,  
 taught  
 By nature, would interpret half the woe  
 That wasted him, would call him with  
 false names  
 Brother, and friend, would press his  
 pallid hand  
 At parting, and watch, dim through tears,  
 the path  
 Of his departure from their father's door.

At length upon the lone Chorasmian  
 shore  
 He paused, a wide and melancholy waste  
 Of putrid marshes. A strong impulse  
 urged  
 His steps to the sea-shore. A swan was  
 there,  
 Beside a sluggish stream among the reeds.  
 It rose as he approached, and with strong  
 wings  
 Scaling the upward sky, bent its bright  
 course  
 High over the immeasurable main.  
 His eyes pursued its flight. — "Thou hast  
 a home,  
 Beautiful bird; thou voyagest to thine  
 home,  
 Where thy sweet mate will twine her  
 downy neck  
 With thine, and welcome thy return with  
 eyes  
 Bright in the lustre of their own fond joy.  
 And what am I that I should linger here,  
 With voice far sweeter than thy dying  
 notes,  
 Spirit more vast than thine, frame more  
 attuned  
 To beauty, wasting these surpassing  
 powers  
 In the deaf air, to the blind earth, and  
 heaven  
 That echoes not my thoughts?" A  
 gloomy smile  
 Of desperate hope wrinkled his quivering  
 lips.  
 For sleep, he knew, kept most relentlessly  
 Its precious charge, and silent death  
 exposed,  
 Faithless perhaps as sleep, a shadowy lure,  
 With doubtful smile mocking its own  
 strange charms.

Startled by his own thoughts he looked  
 around.  
 There was no fair fiend near him, not a  
 sight  
 Or sound of awe but in his own deep mind.  
 A little shallop floating near the shore  
 Caught the impatient wandering of his  
 gaze.  
 It had been long abandoned, for its sides  
 Gaped wide with many a rift, and its  
 frail joints  
 Swayed with the undulations of the tide.  
 A restless impulse urged him to embark  
 And meet lone Death on the drear ocean's  
 waste;  
 For well he knew that mighty Shadow  
 loves  
 The slimy caverns of the populous deep.

The day was fair and sunny, sea and  
 sky  
 Drank its inspiring radiance, and the  
 wind  
 Swept strongly from the shore, blackening  
 the waves.  
 Following his eager soul, the wanderer  
 Leaped in the boat, he spread his cloak  
 aloft  
 On the bare mast, and took his lonely  
 seat,  
 And felt the boat speed o'er the tranquil  
 sea  
 Like a torn cloud before the hurricane.

As one that in a silver vision floats  
 Obedient to the sweep of odorous winds  
 Upon resplendent clouds, so rapidly  
 Along the dark and ruffled waters fled  
 The straining boat. — A whirlwind swept  
 it on,  
 With fierce gusts and precipitating force,  
 Through the white ridges of the chafed  
 sea.  
 The waves arose. Higher and higher  
 still  
 Their fierce necks writhed beneath the  
 tempest's scourge  
 Like serpents struggling in a vulture's  
 grasp.  
 Calm and rejoicing in the fearful war  
 Of wave ruining on wave, and blast on  
 blast  
 Descending, and black flood on whirl-  
 pool driven  
 With dark obliterating course, he sate:  
 As if their genii were the ministers

Appointed to conduct him to the light  
 Of those beloved eyes, the Poet sate  
 Holding the steady helm. Evening came  
 on,  
 The beams of sunset hung their rainbow  
 hues  
 High 'mid the shifting domes of sheeted  
 spray  
 That canopied his path o'er the waste  
 deep;  
 Twilight, ascending slowly from the east,  
 Entwined in duskier wreaths her braided  
 locks  
 O'er the fair front and radiant eyes of  
 day;  
 Night followed, clad with stars. On  
 every side  
 More horribly the multitudinous streams  
 Of ocean's mountainous waste to mutual  
 war  
 Rushed in dark tumult thundering, as  
 to mock  
 The calm and spangled sky. The little  
 boat  
 Still fled before the storm; still fled, like  
 foam  
 Down the steep cataract of a wintry  
 river;  
 Now pausing on the edge of the riven  
 wave;  
 Now leaving far behind the bursting  
 mass  
 That fell, convulsing ocean. Safely  
 fled —  
 As if that frail and wasted human form,  
 Had been an elemental god.  
 At midnight  
 The moon arose: and lo! the ethereal  
 cliffs  
 Of Caucasus, whose icy summits shone  
 Among the stars like sunlight, and around  
 Whose caverned base the whirlpools  
 and the waves  
 Bursting and eddying irresistibly  
 Rage and resound for ever. — Who shall  
 save? —  
 The boat fled on, — the boiling torrent  
 drove, —  
 The crags closed round with black and  
 jagged arms,  
 The shattered mountains overhung the  
 sea,  
 And faster still, beyond all human speed,  
 Suspended on the sweep of the smooth  
 wave,  
 The little boat was driven. A cavern there



Yawned, and amid its slant and winding  
 depths  
 Ingulfed the rushing sea. The boat fled  
 on  
 With unrelaxing speed. — "Vision and  
 Love!"  
 The Poet cried aloud, "I have beheld  
 The path of thy departure. Sleep and  
 death  
 Shall not divide us long!"

The boat pursued

The windings of the cavern. Daylight  
 shone  
 At length upon that gloomy river's flow;  
 Now, where the fiercest war among the  
 waves  
 Is calm, on the unfathomable stream  
 The boat moved slowly. Where the  
 mountain, riven,  
 Exposed those black depths to the azure  
 sky,  
 Ere yet flood's enormous volume fell  
 Even to the base of Caucasus, with sound  
 That shook the everlasting rocks, the  
 mass  
 Filled with one whirlpool all that ample  
 chasm;  
 Stair above stair the eddying water rose,  
 Circling immeasurably fast, and laved  
 With alternating dash the gnarled roots  
 Of mighty trees, that stretched their  
 giant arms  
 In darkness over it. I' the midst was left,  
 Reflecting, yet distorting every cloud,  
 A pool of treacherous and tremendous  
 calm.  
 Seized by the sway of the ascending  
 stream,  
 With dizzy swiftness, round, and round,  
 and round,  
 Ridge after ridge the straining boat arose,  
 Till on the verge of the extremest curve,  
 Where, through an opening of the rocky  
 bank,  
 The waters overflow, and a smooth spot  
 Of glassy quiet mid those battling tides  
 Is left, the boat paused shuddering. —  
 Shall it sink  
 Down the abyss? Shall the reverting  
 stress  
 Of that resistless gulf embosom it?  
 Now shall it fall? — A wandering stream  
 of wind,  
 Breathed from the west, has caught the  
 expanded sail,

And, lo! with gentle motion, between  
 banks  
 Of mossy slope, and on a placid stream,  
 Beneath a woven grove it sails, and hark!  
 The ghastly torrent mingles its far roar,  
 With the breeze murmuring in the musical  
 woods.  
 Where the embowering trees recede, and  
 leave  
 A little space of green expanse, the cove  
 Is closed by meeting banks, whose yellow  
 flowers  
 For ever gaze on their own drooping eyes,  
 Reflected in the crystal calm. The wave  
 Of the boat's motion marred their pensive  
 task,  
 Which nought but vagrant bird, or wanton  
 wind,  
 Or falling spear-grass, or their own decay  
 Had e'er disturbed before. The Poet  
 longed  
 To deck with their bright hues his with-  
 ered hair,  
 But on his heart its solitude returned,  
 And he forbore. Not the strong impulse  
 hid  
 In those flushed cheeks, bent eyes, and  
 shadowy frame  
 Had yet performed its ministry: it hung  
 Upon his life, as lightning in a cloud  
 Gleams, hovering ere it vanish, ere the  
 floods  
 Of night close over it.

The noonday sun

Now shone upon the forest, one vast  
 mass  
 Of mingling shade, whose brown magnifi-  
 cence  
 A narrow vale embosoms. There, huge  
 caves,  
 Scooped in the dark base of their æry  
 rocks  
 Mocking its moans, respond and roar for  
 ever,  
 The meeting boughs and implicated  
 leaves  
 Wove twilight o'er the Poet's path, as led  
 By love, or dream, or god, or mightier  
 Death,  
 He sought in Nature's dearest haunt,  
 some bank,  
 Her cradle, and his sepulchre. More  
 dark  
 And dark the shades accumulate. The  
 oak,  
 Expanding its immense and knotty arms,



Embraces the light beech. The pyramids  
 Of the tall cedar overarching frame  
 Most solemn domes within, and far below,  
 Like clouds suspended in an emerald sky,  
 The ash and the acacia floating hang  
 Tremulous and pale. Like restless serpents, clothed  
 In rainbow and in fire, the parasites,  
 Starred with ten thousand blossoms,  
 flow around  
 The gray trunks, and, as gamesome infants' eyes,  
 With gentle meanings, and most innocent wiles,  
 Fold their beams round the hearts of those  
 that love,  
 These twine their tendrils with the  
 wedded boughs  
 Uniting their close union; the woven  
 leaves  
 Make network of the dark blue light of  
 day,  
 And the night's noontide clearness,  
 mutable  
 As shapes in the weird clouds. Soft  
 mossy lawns  
 Beneath these canopies extend their  
 swells,  
 Fragrant with perfumed herbs, and eyed  
 with blooms  
 Minute yet beautiful. One darkest glen  
 Sends from its woods of musk-rose,  
 twined with jasmine,  
 A soul-dissolving odor, to invite  
 To some more lovely mystery. Through  
 the dell,  
 Silence and Twilight here, twin-sisters,  
 keep  
 Their noonday watch, and sail among  
 the shades,  
 Like vaporous shapes half seen; beyond,  
 a well,  
 Dark, gleaming, and of most translucent  
 wave,  
 Images all the woven boughs above,  
 And each depending leaf, and every speck  
 Of azure sky, darting between their  
 chasms;  
 Nor aught else in the liquid mirror laves  
 Its portraiture, but some inconstant star  
 Between one foliated lattice twinkling  
 fair,  
 Or painted bird, sleeping beneath the  
 moon,  
 Or gorgeous insect floating motionless,

Unconscious of the day, ere yet his wings  
 Have spread their glories to the gaze of  
 noon.

Hither the Poet came. His eyes  
 beheld  
 Their own wan light through the reflected  
 lines  
 Of his thin hair, distinct in the dark  
 depth  
 Of that still fountain; as the human heart,  
 Gazing in dreams over the gloomy grave,  
 Sees its own treacherous likeness there.  
 He heard  
 The motion of the leaves, the grass that  
 sprung  
 Startled and glanced and trembled even  
 to feel  
 An unaccustomed presence, and the  
 sound  
 Of the sweet brook that from the secret  
 springs  
 Of that dark fountain rose. A Spirit  
 seemed  
 To stand beside him — clothed in no  
 bright robes  
 Of shadowy silver or enshrining light,  
 Borrowed from aught the visible world  
 affords  
 Of grace, or majesty, or mystery; —  
 But undulating woods, and silent well,  
 And leaping rivulet, and evening gloom  
 Now deepening the dark shades, for  
 speech assuming,  
 Held commune with him, as if he and it  
 Were all that was, — only . . . when his  
 regard  
 Was raised by intense pensiveness, . . .  
 two eyes,  
 Two starry eyes, hung in the gloom of  
 thought,  
 And seemed with their serene and azure  
 smiles  
 To beckon him.

Obedient to the light  
 That shone within his soul, he went,  
 pursuing  
 The windings of the dell. — The rivulet  
 Wanton and wild, through many a green  
 ravine  
 Beneath the forest flowed. Sometimes  
 it fell  
 Among the moss with hollow harmony  
 Dark and profound. Now on the polished  
 stones

It danced; like childhood laughing as it went:

Then through the plain in tranquil wanderings crept,

Reflecting every herb and drooping bud  
That overhung its quietness. — "O stream!

Whose source is inaccessibly profound,  
Whither do thy mysterious waters tend?  
Thou imagest my life. Thy darksome stillness,

Thy dazzling waves, thy loud and hollow gulfs,

Thy searchless fountain, and invisible course

Have each their type in me: and the wide sky,

And measureless ocean may declare as soon

What oozy cavern or what wandering cloud

Contains thy waters, as the universe  
Tell where these living thoughts reside,

when stretched  
Upon thy flowers my bloodless limbs shall waste

I' the passing wind!"

Beside the grassy shore  
Of the small stream he went; he did impress

On the green moss his tremulous step,  
that caught

Strong shuddering from his burning limbs. As one

Roused by some joyous madness from the couch

Of fever, he did move; yet not like him  
Forgetful of the grave, where, when the flame

Of his frail exultation shall be spent,  
He must descend. With rapid steps he went

Beneath the shade of trees, beside the flow

Of the wild babbling rivulet; and now  
The forest's solemn canopies were changed

For the uniform and lightsome evening sky.

Gray rocks did peep from the spare moss,  
and stemmed

The struggling brook: tall spires of windlestrae

Threw their thin shadows down the rugged slope,

And nought but gnarled roots of ancient pines

Branchless and blasted, clenched with grasping roots

The unwilling soil. A gradual change was here,

Yet ghastly. For, as fast years flow away,

The smooth brow gathers, and the hair grows thin

And white, and where irradiate dewy eyes

Had shone, gleam stony orbs: — so from his steps

Bright flowers departed, and the beautiful shade

Of the green groves, with all their odorous winds

And musical motions. Calm, he still pursued

The stream, that with a larger volume now

Rolled through the labyrinthine dell, and there

Fretted a path through its descending curves

With its wintry speed. On every side now rose

Rocks, which, in unimaginable forms,  
Lift their black and barren pinnacles

In the light of evening, and, its precipice  
Obscuring the ravine, disclosed above,

Mid toppling stones, black gulfs and yawning caves,

Whose windings gave ten thousand various tongues

To the loud stream. Lo! where the pass expands

Its stony jaws, the abrupt mountain breaks,

And seems, with its accumulated crags,  
To overhang the world: for wide expand

Beneath the wan stars and descending moon

Islanded seas, blue mountains, mighty streams,

Dim tracts and vast, robed in the lustrous gloom

Of leaden-colored even, and fiery hills  
Mingling their flames with twilight, on

the verge

Of the remote horizon. The near scene,  
In naked and severe simplicity,

Made contrast with the universe. A pine,  
Rock-rooted, stretched athwart the vacancy

Its swinging boughs, to each inconstant  
 blast  
 Yielding one only response, at each pause  
 In most familiar cadence, with the howl  
 The thunder and the hiss of homeless  
 streams  
 Mingling its solemn song, whilst the  
 broad river,  
 Foaming and hurrying o'er its rugged  
 path,  
 Fell into that immeasurable void,  
 Scattering its waters to the passing  
 winds.

Yet the gray precipice and solemn  
 pine  
 And torrent were not all; — one silent  
 nook  
 Was there. Even on the edge of that  
 vast mountain,  
 Upheld by knotty roots and fallen rocks,  
 It overlooked in its serenity  
 The dark earth, and the bending vault  
 of stars.  
 It was a tranquil spot, that seemed to  
 smile  
 Even in the lap of horror. Ivy clasped  
 The fissured stones with its entwining  
 arms,  
 And did embower with leaves for ever  
 green,  
 And berries dark, the smooth and even  
 space  
 Of its inviolated floor, and here  
 The children of the autumnal whirlwind  
 bore,  
 In wanton sport, those bright leaves,  
 whose decay,  
 Red, yellow, or ethereally pale,  
 Rivals the pride of summer. 'Tis the  
 haunt  
 Of every gentle wind, whose breath can  
 teach  
 The wilds to love tranquillity. One  
 step,  
 One human step alone, has ever broken  
 The stillness of its solitude: — one voice  
 Alone inspired its echoes; — even that  
 voice  
 Which hither came, floating among the  
 winds,  
 And led the loveliest among human forms  
 To make their wild haunts the depository  
 Of all the grace and beauty that endured  
 Its motions, render up its majesty,  
 Scatter its music on the unfeeling storm,

And to the damp leaves and blue cavern  
 mould,  
 Nurses of rainbow flowers and branching  
 moss,  
 Commit the colors of that varying cheek,  
 That snowy breast, those dark and  
 drooping eyes.

The dim and hornèd moon hung low,  
 and poured  
 A sea of lustre on the horizon's verge  
 That overflowed its mountains. Yellow  
 mist  
 Filled the unbounded atmosphere, and  
 drank  
 Wan moonlight even to fulness: not a  
 star  
 Shone, not a sound was heard; the very  
 winds,  
 Danger's grim playmates, on that preci-  
 pice  
 Slept, clasped in his embrace. — O, storm  
 of death!  
 Whose sightless speed divides this sullen  
 night:  
 And thou, colossal Skeleton, that, still  
 Guiding its irresistible career  
 In thy devastating omnipotence,  
 Art king of this frail world, from the red  
 field  
 Of slaughter, from the reeking hospital,  
 The patriot's sacred couch, the snowy bed  
 Of innocence, the scaffold and the throne,  
 A mighty voice invokes thee. Ruin calls  
 His brother Death. A rare and regal  
 prey  
 He hath prepared, prowling around the  
 world;  
 Glutted with which thou mayst repose,  
 and men  
 Go to their graves like flowers or creep-  
 ing worms,  
 Nor ever more offer at thy dark shrine  
 The unheeded tribute of a broken heart.

When on the threshold of the green  
 recess  
 The wanderer's footsteps fell, he knew  
 that death  
 Was on him. Yet a little, ere it fled,  
 Did he resign his high and holy soul  
 To images of the majestic past,  
 That paused within his passive being  
 now,  
 Like winds that bear sweet music, when  
 they breathe

Through some dim latticed chamber.  
 He did place  
 His pale lean hand upon the rugged trunk  
 Of the old pine. Upon an ivied stone  
 Reclined his languid head, his limbs did  
 rest,  
 Diffused and motionless, on the smooth  
 brink  
 Of that obscurest chasm;—and thus he  
 lay,  
 Surrendering to their final impulses  
 The hovering powers of life. Hope and  
 despair,  
 The torturers, slept; no mortal pain or  
 fear  
 Marred his repose, the influxes of sense,  
 And his own being unalloyed by pain,  
 Yet feebler and more feeble, calmly fed  
 The stream of thought, till he lay breath-  
 ing there  
 At peace, and faintly smiling:—his last  
 sight  
 Was the great moon, which o'er the  
 western line  
 Of the wide world her mighty horn sus-  
 pended,  
 With those dun beams inwoven darkness  
 seemed  
 To mingle. Now upon the jagged hills  
 It rests, and still as the divided frame  
 Of the vast meteor sunk, the Poet's blood,  
 That ever beat in mystic sympathy  
 With nature's ebb and flow, grew feeble  
 still:  
 And when two lessening points of light  
 alone  
 Gleamed through the darkness, the alter-  
 nate gasp  
 Of his faint respiration scarce did stir  
 The stagnate night:—till the minutest  
 ray  
 Was quenched, the pulse yet lingered in  
 his heart.  
 It paused—it fluttered. But when  
 heaven remained  
 Utterly black, the murky shades involved  
 An image, silent, cold, and motionless,  
 As their own voiceless earth and vacant  
 air.  
 Even as a vapor fed with golden beams  
 That ministered on sunlight, ere the west  
 Eclipses it, was now that wondrous  
 frame—  
 No sense, no motion, no divinity—  
 A fragile lute, on whose harmonious  
 strings

The breath of heaven did wander— a  
 bright stream  
 Once fed with many-voicèd waves— a  
 dream  
 Of youth, which night and time have  
 quenched forever,  
 Still, dark, and dry, and unremembered  
 now.

O, for Medea's wondrous alchemy,  
 Which wheresoe'er it fell made the earth  
 gleam  
 With bright flowers, and the wintry  
 boughs exhale  
 From vernal blooms fresh fragrance!  
 O, that God,  
 Profuse of poisons, would concede the  
 chalice  
 Which but one living man has drained,  
 who now  
 Vessel of deathless wrath, a slave that  
 feels  
 No proud exemption in the blighting  
 curse  
 He bears, over the world wanders for  
 ever,  
 Lone as incarnate death! O, that the  
 dream  
 Of dark magician in his visioned cave,  
 Raking the cinders of a crucible  
 For life and power, even when his feeble  
 hand  
 Shakes in its last decay, were the true  
 law  
 Of this so lovely world! But thou art  
 fled  
 Like some frail exhalation; which the  
 dawn  
 Robes in its golden beams,—ah! thou  
 hast fled!  
 The brave, the gentle, and the beautiful,  
 The child of grace and genius. Heartless  
 things  
 Are done and said i' the world, and  
 many worms  
 And beasts and men live on, and mighty  
 Earth  
 From sea and mountain, city and wilder-  
 ness,  
 In vespèr low or joyous orison,  
 Lifts still its solemn voice:—but thou  
 art fled—  
 Thou canst no longer know or love the  
 shapes  
 Of this phantasmal scene, who have to  
 thee

Been purest ministers, who are, alas!  
Now thou art not. Upon those pallid lips  
So sweet even in their silence, on those  
eyes

That image sleep in death, upon that  
form

Yet safe from the worm's outrage, let  
no tear

Be shed — not even in thought. Nor,  
when those hues

Are gone, and those divinest lineaments  
Worn by the senseless wind, shall live  
alone

In the frail pauses of this simple strain,  
Let not high verse, mourning the memory  
Of that which is no more, or painting's woe  
Or sculpture, speak in feeble imagery  
Their own cold powers. Art and elo-  
quence,

And all the shows o' the world are frail  
and vain

To weep a loss that turns their lights to  
shade.

It is a woe too "deep for tears," when all  
Is reft at once, when some surpassing  
Spirit,

Whose light adorned the world around it,  
leaves

Those who remain behind, not sobs or  
groans,

The passionate tumult of a clinging hope;  
But pale despair and cold tranquillity,  
Nature's vast frame, the web of human  
things,

Birth and the grave, that are not as they  
were.<sup>1</sup> 1815. March, 1816.

<sup>1</sup> None of Shelley's poems is more characteristic than this. The solemn spirit that reigns throughout, the worship of the majesty of nature, the broodings of a poet's heart in solitude — the mingling of the exulting joy which the various aspects of the visible universe inspires with the sad and struggling pangs which human passion imparts — give a touching interest to the whole. The death which he had often contemplated during the last months as certain and near he here represented in such colors as had, in his lonely musings, soothed his soul to peace. The versification sustains the solemn spirit which breathes throughout: it is peculiarly melodious. The poem ought rather to be considered didactic than narrative; it was the outpouring of his own emotions, embodied in the purest form he could conceive, painted in the ideal hues which his brilliant imagination inspired, and softened by the recent anticipation of death. (Mrs. Shelley's Note.)

The deeper meaning of *Alastor* is to be found, not in the thought of death nor in the poet's recent communings with nature, but in the motto from St. Augustine placed upon its title-page, and in the *Hymn to Intellectual Beauty*, composed about a year

## HYMN TO INTELLECTUAL BEAUTY

### I

THE awful shadow of some unseen Power  
Floats tho' unseen amongst us, —  
visiting

This various world with as inconstant  
wing

As summer winds that creep from flower  
to flower, —

Like moonbeams that behind some piny  
mountain shower,

It visits with inconstant glance

Each human heart and countenance;

Like hues and harmonies of evening, —

Like clouds in starlight widely  
spread, —

Like memory of music fled, —

Like aught that for its grace may be  
Dear, and yet dearer for its mystery.

### II

Spirit of BEAUTY, that dost consecrate  
With thine own hues all thou dost  
shine upon

Of human thought or form, — where  
art thou gone?

Why dost thou pass away and leave our  
state,

This dim vast vale of tears, vacant and  
desolate?

Ask why the sunlight not for ever  
Weaves rainbows o'er yon mountain  
river,

Why aught should fail and fade that once  
is shown,

Why fear and dream and death and  
birth

Cast on the daylight of this earth

later. Enamored of ideal loveliness, the poet pursues his vision through the universe, vainly hoping to assuage the thirst which has been stimulated in his spirit, and vainly longing for some mortal realization of his love. *Alastor*, like *Epipsychidion*, reveals the mistake which Shelley made in thinking that the idea of beauty could become incarnate for him in any earthly form: while the *Hymn to Intellectual Beauty* recognizes the truth that such realization of the ideal is impossible. The very last letter written by Shelley sets the misconception in its proper light: "I think one is always in love with something or other; the error, and I confess it is not easy for spirits cased in flesh and blood to avoid it, consists in seeking in a mortal image the likeness of what is, perhaps, eternal." But this Shelley discovered only with "the years that bring the philosophic mind," and when he was upon the very verge of his untimely death. (Symonds' *Life of Shelley*.)



Such gloom, — why man has such a  
scope

For love and hate, despondency and  
hope?

## III

No voice from some sublimer world hath  
ever

To sage or poet these responses  
given —

Therefore the names of Demon,  
Ghost, and Heaven,

Remain the records of their vain en-  
deavor,

Frail spells — whose uttered charm might  
not avail to sever,

From all we hear and all we see,  
Doubt, chance, and mutability.

Thy light alone — like mist o'er moun-  
tains driven,

Or music by the night wind sent,  
Thro' strings of some still instru-  
ment,

Or moonlight on a midnight stream,  
Gives grace and truth to life's unquiet  
dream.

## IV

Love, Hope, and Self-esteem, like clouds  
depart

And come, for some uncertain mo-  
ments lent.

Man were immortal, and omnipotent,  
Didst thou, unknown and awful as thou  
art,

Keep with thy glorious train firm state  
within his heart.

Thou messenger of sympathies,

That wax and wane in lovers' eyes —

Thou — that to human thought art  
nourishment,

Like darkness to a dying flame!

Depart not as thy shadow came.

Depart not — lest the grave should  
be,

Like life and fear, a dark reality.

## V

While yet a boy I sought for ghosts, and  
sped

Thro' many a listening chamber, cave  
and ruin,

And starlight wood, with fearful steps  
pursuing

Hopes of high talk with the departed  
dead.

I called on poisonous names with which  
our youth is fed;

I was not heard — I saw them not —

When musing deeply on the lot

Of life, at the sweet time when winds  
are wooing

All vital things that wake to bring

News of birds and blossoming, —

Sudden, thy shadow fell on me;

I shrieked, and clasped my hands in  
ecstasy!

## VI

I vowed that I would dedicate my powers  
To thee and thine — have I not kept  
the vow?

With beating heart and streaming eyes,  
even now

I call the phantoms of a thousand  
hours

Each from his voiceless grave: they have  
in visioned bowers

Of studious zeal or love's delight

Outwatched with me the envious  
night —

They know that never joy illumed my  
brow

Unlinked with hope that thou  
wouldst free

This world from its dark slavery,

That thou — O awful LOVELINESS,

Wouldst give whate'er these words can-  
not express.

## VII

The day becomes more solemn and serene  
When noon is past — there is a har-  
mony

In autumn, and a lustre in its sky,  
Which thro' the summer is not heard or  
seen,

As if it could not be, as if it had not  
been!

Thus let thy power, which like the  
truth

Of nature on my passive youth  
Descended, to my onward life supply

Its calm — to one who worships  
thee,

And every form containing thee,

Whom, SPIRIT fair, thy spells did  
bind

To fear himself, and love all human  
kind.

1816. 1817.

MONT BLANC<sup>1</sup>

LINES WRITTEN IN THE VALE OF  
CHAMOUNI

THE everlasting universe of things  
Flows through the mind, and rolls its  
rapid waves,  
Now dark — now glittering — now reflecting gloom —  
Now lending splendor, where from secret  
springs  
The source of human thought its tribute  
brings  
Of waters, — with a sound but half its own,  
Such as a feeble brook will oft assume  
In the wild woods, among the mountains  
lone,  
Where waterfalls around it leap for ever,  
Where woods and winds contend, and a  
vast river  
Over its rocks ceaselessly bursts and  
raves.

Thus thou, Ravine of Arve — dark, deep  
Ravine —  
Thou many-colored, many-voicèd vale,  
Over whose pines, and crags, and caverns  
sail  
Fast cloud shadows and sunbeams: awful  
scene,  
Where Power in likeness of the Arve  
comes down  
From the ice gulfs that gird his secret  
throne,  
Bursting through these dark mountains  
like the flame  
Of lightning thro' the tempest; — thou  
dost lie,

<sup>1</sup> "Mont Blanc" was inspired by a view of that mountain and its surrounding peaks and valleys, as he lingered on the Bridge of Arve on his way through the Valley of Chamouni. Shelley makes the following mention of this poem in his publication of the *History of a Six Weeks' Tour, and Letters from Switzerland*: "The poem entitled *Mont Blanc* is written by the author of the two letters from Chamouni and Veval. It was composed under the immediate impression of the deep and powerful feelings excited by the objects which it attempts to describe; and, as an undisciplined overflowing of the soul, rests its claim to approbation on an attempt to imitate the untamable wildness and inaccessible solemnity from which those feelings sprang." (From Mrs. Shelley's *Note on the Poems of 1816*.) Compare Coleridge's "Hymn before Sunrise in the Vale of Chamouni" (p. 109). Coleridge had never been in the Vale of Chamouni, and drew the suggestion and part of the substance of his Hymn from a poem by Frederike Brun.

Thy giant brood of pines around thee  
clinging,  
Children of elder time, in whose devotion  
The chainless winds still come and ever  
came  
To drink their odors, and their mighty  
swinging  
To hear — an old and solemn harmony;  
Thine earthly rainbows stretched across  
the sweep  
Of the ethereal waterfall, whose veil  
Robes some unsculptured image; the  
strange sleep  
Which when the voices of the desert fail  
Wraps all in its own deep eternity; —  
Thy caverns echoing to the Arve's com-  
motion,  
A loud, lone sound no other sound can  
tame;  
Thou art pervaded with that ceaseless  
motion,  
Thou art the path of that unresting  
sound —  
Dizzy Ravine! and when I gaze on thee  
I seem as in a trance sublime and strange  
To muse on my own separate phantasy,  
My own, my human mind, which pas-  
sively  
Now renders and receives fast influenc-  
ings,  
Holding an unremitting interchange  
With the clear universe of things around;  
One legion of wild thoughts, whose wan-  
dering wings  
Now float above thy darkness, and now  
rest  
Where that or thou art no unbidden guest,  
In the still cave of the witch Poesy,  
Seeking among the shadows that pass by  
Ghosts of all things that are, some shade  
of thee,  
Some phantom, some faint image; till  
the breast  
From which they fled recalls them, thou  
art there!

Some say that gleams of a remoter world  
Visit the soul in sleep, — that death is  
slumber,  
And that its shapes the busy thoughts  
outnumber  
Of those who wake and live. — I look on  
high;  
Has some unknown omnipotence un-  
furled  
The veil of life and death? or do I lie

In dream, and does the mightier world of  
 sleep  
 Spread far around and inaccessible  
 Its circles? For the very spirit fails,  
 Driven like a homeless cloud from steep  
 to steep  
 That vanishes among the viewless gales!  
 Far, far above, piercing the infinite sky,  
 Mont Blanc appears, — still, snowy, and  
 serene —  
 Its subject mountains their unearthly  
 forms  
 Pile around it, ice and rock; broad vales  
 between  
 Of frozen floods, unfathomable deeps,  
 Blue as the overhanging heaven, that  
 spread  
 And wind among the accumulated steeps;  
 A desert peopled by the storms alone,  
 Save when the eagle brings some hunter's  
 bone,  
 And the wolf tracks her there — how  
 hideously  
 Its shapes are heaped around! rude,  
 bare, and high,  
 Ghastly, and scarred, and riven. — Is this  
 the scene  
 Where the old Earthquake-demon taught  
 her young  
 Ruin? Were these their toys? or did a  
 sea  
 Of fire envelope once this silent snow?  
 None can reply — all seems eternal now.  
 The wilderness has a mysterious tongue  
 Which teaches awful doubt, or faith so  
 mild,  
 So solemn, so serene, that man may be  
 But for such faith with nature recon-  
 ciled;  
 Thou hast a voice, great Mountain, to  
 repeal  
 Large codes of fraud and woe; not under-  
 stood  
 By all, but which the wise, and great,  
 and good  
 Interpret, or make felt, or deeply feel.

The fields, the lakes, the forests, and the  
 streams,  
 Ocean, and all the living things that dwell  
 Within the dædal earth; lightning and  
 rain,  
 Earthquake, and fiery flood, and hurri-  
 cane,  
 The torpor of the year when feeble dreams  
 Visit the hidden buds, or dreamless sleep

Holds every future leaf and flower; —  
 the bound  
 With which from that detested trance  
 they leap;  
 The works and ways of man, their death  
 and birth,  
 And that of him and all that his may be;  
 All things that move and breathe with  
 toil and sound  
 Are born and die; revolve, subside and  
 swell.  
 Power dwells apart in its tranquillity  
 Remote, serene, and inaccessible;  
 And *this*, the naked countenance of earth,  
 On which I gaze, even these primeval  
 mountains  
 Teach the adverting mind. The glaciers  
 creep  
 Like snakes that watch their prey, from  
 their far fountains,  
 Slow rolling on; there, many a precipice,  
 Frost and the Sun in scorn of mortal  
 power  
 Have piled: dome, pyramid, and pin-  
 nacle,  
 A city of death, distinct with many a  
 tower  
 And wall impregnable of beaming ice.  
 Yet not a city, but a flood of ruin  
 Is there, that from the boundaries of the  
 sky  
 Rolls its perpetual stream; vast pines are  
 strewing  
 Its destined path, or in the mangled soil  
 Branchless and shattered stand; the  
 rocks, drawn down  
 From yon remotest waste, have over-  
 thrown  
 The limits of the dead and living world,  
 Never to be reclaimed. The dwelling-  
 place  
 Of insects, beasts, and birds, becomes  
 its spoil;  
 Their food and their retreat for ever gone,  
 So much of life and joy is lost. The race  
 Of man, flies far in dread; his work and  
 dwelling  
 Vanish, like smoke before the tempest's  
 stream,  
 And their place is not known. Below,  
 vast caves  
 Shine in the rushing torrents' restless  
 gleam,  
 Which from those secret chasms in tumult  
 welling  
 Meet in the vale, and one majestic River,

The breath and blood of distant lands,  
     for ever  
 Rolls its loud waters to the ocean waves,  
 Breathes its swift vapors to the circling  
     air.

Mont Blanc yet gleams on high:— the  
     power is there,  
 The still and solemn power of many  
     sights,  
 And many sounds, and much of life and  
     death.

In the calm darkness of the moonless  
     nights,  
 In the lone glare of day, the snows descend  
     Upon that Mountain; none beholds  
     them there,

Nor when the flakes burn in the sinking  
     sun,  
 Or the star-beams dart through them:  
     — Winds contend

Silently there, and heap the snow with  
     breath  
 Rapid and strong, but silently! Its home  
 The voiceless lightning in these solitudes  
 Keeps innocently, and like vapor broods  
 Over the snow. The secret strength of  
     things

Which governs thought, and to the infinite  
     dome  
 Of heaven is as a law, inhabits thee!  
 And what were thou, and earth, and  
     stars, and sea,

If to the human mind's imaginings  
 Silence and solitude were vacancy?  
*July 23, 1816. 1817.*

#### TO MARY—

##### DEDICATION OF THE REVOLT OF ISLAM

So now my summer task is ended, Mary,  
 And I return to thee, mine own heart's  
     home;

As to his Queen some victor Knight of  
     Faëry,  
 Earning bright spoils for her enchanted  
     dome;

Nor thou disdain that, ere my fame  
     become

A star among the stars of mortal night,  
 If it indeed may cleave its natal gloom,  
 Its doubtful promise thus I would unite  
 With thy beloved name, thou Child of  
     love and light.

The toil which stole from thee so many  
     an hour

Is ended— and the fruit is at thy feet!  
 No longer where the woods to frame a  
     bower

With interlacèd branches mix and  
     meet,

Or where, with sounds like many voices  
     sweet,

Waterfalls leap among wild islands green  
 Which framed for my lone boat a lone  
     retreat

Of moss-grown trees and weeds, shall I  
     be seen:

But beside thee, where still my heart  
     has ever been.

Thoughts of great deeds were mine, dear  
     Friend, when first

The clouds which wrap this world  
     from youth did pass.

I do remember well the hour which burst  
 My spirit's sleep: a fresh Maydawn it  
     was,

When I walked forth upon the glittering  
     grass,

And wept, I knew not why: until there  
     rose

From the near schoolroom voices that,  
     alas!

Were but one echo from a world of  
     woes—

The harsh and grating strife of tyrants  
     and of foes.

And then I clasped my hands, and looked  
     around,

But none was near to mock my stream-  
     ing eyes,

Which poured their warm drops on the  
     sunny ground—

So, without shame, I spake:—"I  
     will be wise,

And just, and free, and mild, if in me  
     lies

Such power, for I grow weary to behold  
 The selfish and the strong still tyrannize

Without reproach or check." I then  
     controlled

My tears, my heart grew calm, and I was  
     meek and bold.

And from that hour did I with earnest  
     thought

Heap knowledge from forbidden mines  
     of lore.

Yet nothing that my tyrants knew or  
taught

I cared to learn, but from that secret  
store

Wrought linkèd armor for my soul,  
before

It might walk forth to war among man-  
kind;

Thus power and hope were strength-  
ened more and more

Within me, till there came upon my mind  
A sense of loneliness, a thirst with which  
I pined.

Alas that love should be a blight and  
snare

To those who seek all sympathies in  
one! —

Such once I sought in vain; then black  
despair,

The shadow of a starless night, was  
thrown

Over the world in which I moved alone:  
Yet never found I one not false to me,

Hard hearts, and cold, like weights of  
icy stone

Which crushed and withered mine, that  
could not be

Aught but a lifeless clog, until revived by  
thee.

Thou Friend, whose presence on my  
wintry heart

Fell, like bright Spring upon some herb-  
less plain,

How beautiful and calm and free thou  
wert

In thy young wisdom, when the mortal  
chain

Of Custom thou didst burst and rend  
in twain,

And walk as free as light the clouds  
among,

Which many an envious slave then  
breathed in vain

From his dim dungeon, and my spirit  
sprung

To meet thee from the woes which had  
begirt it long!

No more alone through the world's wilder-  
ness,

Although I trod the paths of high  
intent,

I journeyed now: no more companion-  
less,

Where solitude is like despair, I went. —

There is the wisdom of a stern content

When Poverty can blight the just and  
good,

When Infamy dares mock the innocent,  
And cherished friends turn with the

multitude

To trample: this was ours, and we un-  
shaken stood!

Now has descended a serener hour,

And, with inconstant fortune, friends  
return;

Though suffering leaves the knowledge  
and the power

Which says "Let scorn be not repaid  
with scorn."

And from thy side two gentle babes are  
born

To fill our home with smiles, and thus  
are we

Most fortunate beneath life's beaming  
morn:

And these delights, and thou, have been  
to me

The parents of the Song I consecrate to  
thee.

Is it that now my inexperienced fingers  
But strike the prelude of a loftier strain?

Or must the lyre on which my spirit  
lingers

Soon pause in silence, ne'er to sound  
again,

Though it might shake the Anarch  
Custom's reign,

And charm the minds of men to Truth's  
own sway

Holier than was Amphiön's? I would  
fain

Reply in hope — but I am worn away,  
And Death and Love are yet contending

for their prey.

And what art thou? I know, but dare  
not speak:

Time may interpret to his silent years.

Yet in the paleness of thy thoughtful  
cheek,

And in the light thine ample forehead  
wears,

And in thy sweetest smiles, and in thy  
tears,

And in thy gentle speech, a prophecy  
Is whispered, to subdue my fondest

fears:



And, through thine eyes, even in thy  
soul I see  
A lamp of vestal fire burning internally.

They say that thou wert lovely from  
thy birth,  
Of glorious parents, thou aspiring  
Child.

I wonder not—for One then left this earth  
Whose life was like a setting planet mild,  
Which clothed thee in the radiance  
undefiled

Of its departing glory; still her fame  
Shines on thee, through the tempests  
dark and wild

Which shake these latter days; and thou  
canst claim

The shelter, from thy Sire, of an immortal  
name.

One voice came forth from many a mighty  
spirit

Which was the echo of three-thousand  
years;

And the tumultuous world stood mute  
to hear it,

As some lone man who in a desert  
hears:

The music of his home:—unwonted  
fears

Fell on the pale oppressors of our race,  
And Faith and Custom and low-  
thoughted cares,

Like thunder-stricken dragons, for a  
space

Left the torn human heart, their food  
and dwelling-place.

Truth's deathless voice pauses among  
mankind!

If there must be no response to my  
cry—

If men must rise and stamp, with fury  
blind,

On his pure name who loves them—  
thou and I,

Sweet friend! can look from our  
tranquillity

Like lamps into the world's tempestuous  
night,—

Two tranquil stars, while clouds are  
passing by

Which wrap them from the foundering  
seaman's sight,

That burn from year to year with unex-  
tinguished light.

1817. 1818.

## OZYMANDIAS

I MET a traveller from an antique land  
Who said: Two vast and trunkless legs  
of stone

Stand in the desert. Near them, on the  
sand,

Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose  
frown,

And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold  
command,

Tell that its sculptor well those passions  
read

Which yet survive, stamped on these life-  
less things,

The hand that mocked them and the  
heart that fed:

And on the pedestal these words appear:  
"My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:  
Look on my works, ye Mighty, and de-  
spair!"

Nothing beside remains. Round the  
decay

Of that colossal wreck, boundless and  
bare

The lone and level sands stretch far  
away. 1817. 1818.

## ON A FADED VIOLET

THE odor from the flower is gone  
Which like thy kisses breathed on me;  
The color from the flower is flown  
Which glowed of thee and only thee!

A shrivelled, lifeless, vacant form,  
It lies on my abandoned breast,  
And mocks the heart which yet is warm,  
With cold and silent rest.

I weep,—my tears revive it not!  
I sigh,—it breathes no more on me;  
Its mute and uncomplaining lot  
Is such as mine should be.

1818. 1821.

## LINES WRITTEN AMONG THE EUGANEAN HILLS

MANY a green isle needs must be  
In the deep wide sea of misery,  
Or the mariner, worn and wan,  
Never thus could voyage on  
Day and night, and night and day,

Drifting on his dreary way,  
 With the solid darkness black  
 Closing round his vessel's track :  
 Whilst above the sunless sky,  
 Big with clouds, hangs heavily,  
 And behind the tempest fleet  
 Hurries on with lightning feet,  
 Riving sail, and cord, and plank,  
 Till the ship has almost drank  
 Death from the o'er-brimming deep ;  
 And sinks down, down, like that sleep  
 When the dreamer seems to be  
 Weltering through eternity ;  
 And the dim low line before  
 Of a dark and distant shore  
 Still recedes, as ever still  
 Longing with divided will,  
 But no power to seek or shun,  
 He is ever drifted on  
 O'er the unrepousing wave  
 To the haven of the grave.  
 What, if there no friends will greet ;  
 What, if there no heart will meet  
 His with love's impatient beat ;  
 Wander wheresoe'er he may,  
 Can he dream before that day  
 To find refuge from distress  
 In friendship's smile, in love's caress ?  
 Then 'twill wreak him little woe  
 Whether such there be or no :  
 Senseless is the breast, and cold,  
 Which relenting love would fold ;  
 Bloodless are the veins and chill  
 Which the pulse of pain did fill ;  
 Every little living nerve  
 That from bitter words did swerve  
 Round the tortured lips and brow,  
 Are like sapless leaflets now  
 Frozen upon December's bough.  
 On the beach of a northern sea  
 Which tempests shake eternally,  
 As once the wretch there lay to sleep,  
 Lies a solitary heap,  
 One white skull and seven dry bones,  
 On the margin of the stones,  
 Where a few gray rushes stand,  
 Boundaries of the sea and land :  
 Nor is heard one voice of wail  
 But the sea-mews, as they sail  
 O'er the billows of the gale ;  
 Or the whirlwind up and down  
 Howling, like a slaughtered town,  
 When a king in glory rides  
 Through the pomp of fratricides :  
 Those unburied bones around  
 There is many a mournful sound ;

There is no lament for him,  
 Like a sunless vapor, dim,  
 Who once clothed with life and thought  
 What now moves nor murmurs not.

Ay, many flowering islands lie  
 In the waters of wide Agony :  
 To such a one this morn was led  
 My bark by soft winds piloted :  
 'Mid the mountains Euganean  
 I stood listening to the pæan,  
 With which the legioned rooks did hail  
 The sun's uprise majestic ;  
 Gathering round with wings all hoar,  
 Thro' the dewy mist they soar  
 Like gray shades, till the eastern heaven  
 Bursts, and then, as clouds of even,  
 Flecked with fire and azure, lie  
 In the unfathomable sky,  
 So their plumes of purple grain,  
 Starred with drops of golden rain,  
 Gleam above the sunlight woods,  
 As in silent multitudes  
 On the morning's fitful gale  
 Thro' the broken mist they sail,  
 And the vapors cloven and gleaming  
 Follow down the dark steep streaming,  
 Till all is bright, and clear, and still,  
 Round the solitary hill.

Beneath is spread like a green sea  
 The waveless plain of Lombardy,  
 Bounded by the vaporous air,  
 Islanded by cities fair ;  
 Underneath day's azure eyes  
 Ocean's nursing, Venice lies,  
 A peopled labyrinth of walls,  
 Amphitrite's destined halls,  
 Which her hoary sire now paves  
 With his blue and beaming waves.  
 Lo ! the sun upsprings behind,  
 Broad, red, radiant, half reclined  
 On the level quivering line  
 Of the waters crystalline ;  
 And before that chasm of light,  
 As within a furnace bright,  
 Column, tower, and dome, and spire,  
 Shine like obelisks of fire,  
 Pointing with inconstant motion  
 From the altar of dark ocean  
 To the sapphire-tinted skies ;  
 As the flames of sacrifice  
 From the marble shrines did rise,  
 As to pierce the dome of gold  
 Where Apollo spoke of old.

Sun-girt City, thou hast been  
 Ocean's child, and then his queen;  
 Now is come a darker day,  
 And thou soon must be his prey,  
 If the power that raised thee here  
 Hallow so thy watery bier.  
 A less drear ruin than than now,  
 With thy conquest-branded brow  
 Stooping to the slave of slaves  
 From thy throne, among the waves  
 Wilt thou be, when the sea-mew  
 Flies, as once before it flew,  
 O'er thine isles depopulate,  
 And all is in its ancient state,  
 Save where many a palace gate  
 With green sea-flowers overgrown  
 Like a rock of ocean's own,  
 Topples o'er the abandoned sea  
 As the tides change sullenly.  
 The fisher on his watery way,  
 Wandering at the close of day,  
 Will spread his sail and seize his oar  
 Till he pass the gloomy shore,  
 Lest thy dead should, from their sleep  
 Bursting o'er the starlight deep,  
 Lead a rapid masque of death  
 O'er the waters of his path.

Those who alone thy towers behold  
 Quivering through aerial gold,  
 As I now behold them here,  
 Would imagine not they were  
 Sepulchres, where human forms,  
 Like pollution-nourished worms  
 To the corpse of greatness cling,  
 Murdered, and now mouldering:  
 But if Freedom should awake  
 In her omnipotence, and shake  
 From the Celtic Anarch's hold  
 All the keys of dungeons cold,  
 Where a hundred cities lie  
 Chained like thee, ingloriously,  
 Thou and all thy sister band  
 Might adorn this sunny land,  
 Twining memories of old time  
 With new virtues more sublime;  
 If not, perish thou and they,  
 Clouds which stain truth's rising day  
 By her sun consumed away,  
 Earth can spare ye: while like flowers,  
 In the waste of years and hours,  
 From your dust new nations spring  
 With more kindly blossoming.  
 Perish — let there only be  
 Floating o'er thy heartless sea  
 As the garment of thy sky

Clothes the world immortally,  
 One remembrance, more sublime  
 Than the tattered pall of time,  
 Which scarce hides thy visage wan; —  
 That a tempest-cleaving Swan<sup>1</sup>  
 Of the songs of Albion,  
 Driven from his ancestral streams  
 By the might of evil dreams,  
 Found a nest in thee; and Ocean  
 Welcomed him with such emotion  
 That its joy grew his, and sprung  
 From his lips like music flung  
 O'er a mighty thunder-fit  
 Chastening terror: — what though yet  
 Poesy's unfailing River,  
 Which thro' Albion winds for ever  
 Lashing with melodious wave  
 Many a sacred Poet's grave,  
 Mourn its latest nursling fled?  
 What though thou with all thy dead  
 Scarce can for this fame repay  
 Aught thine own? oh, rather say,  
 Though thy sins and slaveries foul  
 Overcloud a sunlike soul? —  
 As the ghost of Homer clings  
 Round Scamander's wasting springs;  
 As divinest Shakespere's might  
 Fills Avon and the world with light  
 Like omniscient power which he  
 Imaged 'mid mortality;  
 As the love from Petrarch's urn,  
 Yet amid yon hills doth burn,  
 A quenchless lamp by which the heart  
 Sees things unearthly; — so thou art  
 Mighty spirit — so shall be  
 The City that did refuge thee.

Lo, the sun floats up the sky  
 Like thought-wingèd Liberty,  
 Till the universal light  
 Seems to level plain and height;  
 From the sea a mist has spread,  
 And the beams of morn lie dead  
 On the towers of Venice now,  
 Like its glory long ago.  
 By the skirts of that gray cloud  
 Many-domèd Padua proud  
 Stands, a peopled solitude,  
 'Mid the harvest-shining plain,  
 Where the peasant heaps his grain  
 In the garner of his foe,  
 And the milk-white oxen slow  
 With the purple vintage strain,  
 Heaped upon the creaking wain,

<sup>1</sup> Byron.

That the brutal Celt may swill  
 Drunken sleep with savage will;  
 And the sickle to the sword  
 Lies unchanged, though many a lord,  
 Like a weed whose shade is poison,  
 Overgrows this region's foison,  
 Sheaves of whom are ripe to come  
 To destruction's harvest home:  
 Men must reap the things they sow,  
 Force from force must ever flow,  
 Or worse; but 'tis a bitter woe  
 That love or reason cannot change  
 The despot's rage, the slave's revenge.

Padua, thou within whose walls  
 Those mute guests at festivals,  
 Son and Mother, Death and Sin,  
 Played at dice for Ezzelin,  
 Till Death cried, "I win!"  
 And Sin cursed to lose the wager,  
 But Death promised, to assuage her,  
 That he would petition for  
 Her to be made Vice-Emperor,  
 When the destined years were o'er,  
 Over all between the Po  
 And the eastern Alpine snow,  
 Under the mighty Austrian.  
 Sin smiled so as Sin only can,  
 And since that time, ay, long before,  
 Both have ruled from shore to shore,  
 That incestuous pair, who follow  
 Tyrants as the sun the swallow,  
 As Repentance follows Crime,  
 And as changes follow Time.

In thine halls the lamp of learning,  
 Padua, now no more is burning;  
 Like a meteor, whose wild way  
 Is lost over the grave of day,  
 It gleams betrayed and to betray:  
 Once remotest nations came  
 To adore that sacred flame,  
 When it lit not many a hearth  
 On this cold and gloomy earth:  
 Now new fires from antique light  
 Spring beneath the wide world's might  
 But their spark lies dead in thee,  
 Trampled out by tyranny.  
 As the Norway woodman quells,  
 In the depth of piny dells,  
 One light flame among the brakes,  
 While the boundless forest shakes,  
 And its mighty trunks are torn  
 By the fire thus lowly born:  
 The spark beneath his feet is dead,  
 He starts to see the flames it fed

Howling through the darkened sky  
 With a myriad tongues victoriously,  
 And sinks down in fear: so thou,  
 O Tyranny, beholdest now  
 Light around thee, and thou hearest  
 The loud flames ascend, and fearest:  
 Grovel on the earth; ay, hide  
 In the dust thy purple pride!

Noon descends around me now:  
 'Tis the noon of autumn's glow,  
 When a soft and purple mist  
 Like a vaporous amethyst,  
 Or an air-dissolvèd star  
 Mingling light and fragrance, far  
 From the curved horizon's bound  
 To the point of heaven's profound,  
 Fills the overflowing sky:  
 And the plains that silent lie  
 Underneath, the leaves unsodden  
 Where the infant frost has trodden  
 With his morning-wingèd feet,  
 Whose bright print is gleaming yet;  
 And the red and golden vines,  
 Piercing with their trellised lines  
 The rough, dark-skirted wilderness;  
 The dun and bladed grass no less,  
 Pointing from this hoary tower  
 In the windless air; the flower  
 Glimmering at my feet; the line  
 Of the olive-sandalled Apennine,  
 In the south dimly islanded;  
 And the Alps, whose snows are spread  
 High between the clouds and sun;  
 And of living things each one;  
 And my spirit which so long  
 Darkened this swift stream of song,  
 Interpenetrated lie  
 By the glory of the sky:  
 Be it love, light, harmony,  
 Odor or the soul of all  
 Which from heaven like dew doth fall,  
 Or the mind which feeds this verse  
 Peopling the lone universe.  
 Noon descends, and after noon  
 Autumn's evening meets me soon,  
 Leading the infantine moon,  
 And that one star, which to her  
 Almost seems to minister  
 Half the crimson light she brings  
 From the sunset's radiant springs:  
 And the soft dreams of the morn  
 (Which like wingèd winds had borne  
 To that silent isle, which lies  
 'Mid remembered agonies,  
 The frail bark of this lone being)

Pass, to other sufferers fleeing,  
And its ancient pilot, Pain,  
Sits beside the helm again.

Other flowering isles must be  
In the sea of life and agony :  
Other spirits float and flee  
O'er that gulf : even now, perhaps,  
On some rock the wild wave wraps,  
With folded wings they waiting sit  
For my bark, to pilot it  
To some calm and blooming cove,  
Where for me, and those I love,  
May a windless bower be built,  
Far from passion, pain, and guilt,  
In a dell 'mid lawny hills,  
Which the wild sea-murmur fills,  
And soft sunshine, and the sound  
Of old forests echoing round,  
And the light and smell divine  
Of all flowers that breathe and shine :  
We may live so happy there,  
That the spirits of the air,  
Envyng us, may even entice  
To our healing paradise  
The polluting multitude ;  
But their rage would be subdued  
By that clime divine and calm,  
And the winds whose wings rain balm  
On the uplifted soul, and leaves  
Under which the bright sea heaves ;  
While each breathless interval  
In their whisperings musical  
The inspired soul supplies  
With its own deep melodies,  
And the love which heals all strife  
Circling, like the breath of life,  
All things in that sweet abode  
With its own mild brotherhood :  
They, not it, would change ; and soon  
Every sprite beneath the moon  
Would repent its envy vain,  
And the earth grow young again.

*October, 1818. 1819.*

### STANZAS

WRITTEN IN DEJECTION, NEAR NAPLES

THE sun is warm, the sky is clear,  
The waves are dancing fast and bright,  
Blue isles and snowy mountains wear,  
The purple noon's transparent might,  
The breath of the moist earth is light,  
Around its unexpanded buds ;  
Like many a voice of one delight,

The winds, the birds, the ocean floods,  
The City's voice itself is soft like Soli-  
tude's.

I see the Deep's untrampled floor  
With green and purple seaweeds  
strown ;

I see the waves upon the shore,  
Like light dissolved in star-showers,  
thrown :

I sit upon the sands alone,  
The lightning of the noontide ocean  
Is flashing round me, and a tone  
Arises from its measured motion,  
How sweet ! did any heart now share in  
my emotion.

Alas ! I have nor hope nor health,  
Nor peace within nor calm around,  
Nor that content surpassing wealth  
The sage in meditation found,  
And walked with inward glory  
crowned —

Nor fame, nor power, nor love, nor leisure.  
Others I see whom these surround —  
Smiling they live, and call life pleasure ; —  
To me that cup has been dealt in another  
measure.

Yet now despair itself is mild,  
Even as the winds and waters are ;  
I could lie down like a tired child,  
And weep away the life of care  
Which I have borne and yet must bear,  
Till death like sleep might steal on me,  
And I might feel in the warm air  
My cheek grow cold, and hear the sea  
Breathe o'er my dying brain its last  
monotony.

Some might lament that I were cold,  
As I, when this sweet day is gone,  
Which my lost heart, too soon grown old,  
Insults with this untimely moan ;  
They might lament — for I am one  
Whom men love not, — and yet regret,  
Unlike this day, which, when the sun  
Shall on its stainless glory set,  
Will linger, though enjoyed, like joy in  
memory yet. *1818. 1824.*

### SONNET: ENGLAND IN 1819

AN old, mad, blind, despised, and dying  
king, —  
Princes, the dregs of their dull race who  
flow



Through public scorn,— mud from a  
 muddy spring, —  
 Rulers who neither see, nor feel, nor know,  
 But leech-like to their fainting country  
 cling,  
 Till they drop, blind in blood, without a  
 blow, —  
 A people starved and stabbed in the  
 untilled field, —  
 An army, which liberticide and prey  
 Makes as a two-edged sword to all who  
 wield  
 Golden and sanguine laws which tempt  
 and slay;  
 Religion Christless, Godless—a book  
 sealed;  
 A Senate,— Time's worst statute unre-  
 pealed, —  
 Are graves, from which a glorious Phan-  
 tom may  
 Burst, to illumine our tempestuous day.  
 1819. 1839.

ODE TO THE WEST WIND<sup>1</sup>

## I

O WILD West Wind, thou breath of  
 Autumn's being,  
 Thou, from whose unseen presence the  
 leaves dead  
 Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter  
 fleeing,  
 Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic  
 red,  
 Pestilence-stricken multitudes: O thou,  
 Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed

The wingèd seeds, where they lie cold  
 and low,  
 Each like a corpse within its grave, until  
 Thine azure sister of the spring shall blow

<sup>1</sup> This poem was conceived and chiefly written in a wood that skirts the Arno, near Florence, and on a day when that tempestuous wind, whose temperature is at once mild and animating, was collecting the vapors which pour down the autumnal rains. They began, as I foresaw, at sunset with a violent tempest of hail and rain, attended by that magnificent thunder and lightning peculiar to the Cisalpine regions.

The phenomenon alluded to at the conclusion of the third stanza is well known to naturalists. The vegetation at the bottom of the sea, of rivers, and of lakes, sympathizes with that of the land in the change of seasons, and is consequently influenced by the winds which announce it. (*Shelley's note.*)

Her clarion o'er the dreaming earth, and  
 fill  
 (Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed  
 in air)  
 With living hues and odors plain and hill;  
 Wild Spirit, which art moving every-  
 where;  
 Destroyer and preserver; hear, Oh hear!

## II

Thou on whose stream, 'mid the steep  
 sky's commotion,  
 Loose clouds like earth's decaying leaves  
 are shed,  
 Shook from the tangled boughs of Heaven  
 and Ocean,  
 Angels of rain and lightning: there are  
 spread  
 On the blue surface of thine airy surge,  
 Like the bright hair uplifted from the  
 head

Of some fierce Mænad, even from the dim  
 verge  
 Of the horizon to the zenith's height  
 The locks of the approaching storm.  
 Thou dirge

Of the dying year, to which this closing  
 night  
 Will be the dome of a vast sepulchre,  
 Vaulted with all thy congregated might

Of vapors, from whose solid atmosphere  
 Black rain, and fire, and hail will burst:  
 Oh hear!

## III

Thou who didst waken from his summer  
 dreams  
 The blue Mediterranean, where he lay,  
 Lulled by the coil of his crystalline  
 streams,

Beside a pumice isle in Baïæ's bay,  
 And saw in sleep old palaces and towers  
 Quivering within the wave's intenser day,

All overgrown with azure moss and  
 flowers  
 So sweet, the sense fainted picturing them!  
 Thou  
 For whose path the Atlantic's level powers

Cleave themselves into chasms, while far  
 below  
 The sea-blooms and the oozy woods which  
 wear  
 The sapless foliage of the ocean, know  
 Thy voice, and suddenly grow gray with  
 fear,  
 And tremble and despoil themselves :  
 Oh hear !

## IV

If I were a dead leaf thou mightest bear ;  
 If I were a swift cloud to fly with thee ;  
 A wave to pant beneath thy power, and  
 share

The impulse of thy strength, only less free  
 Than thou, O uncontrollable ! If even  
 I were as in my boyhood, and could be

The comrade of thy wanderings over  
 heaven,  
 As then, when to outstrip thy skiey speed  
 Scarce seemed a vision ; I would ne'er  
 have striven

As thus with thee in prayer in my sore  
 need.

Oh lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud !  
 I fall upon the thorns of life ! I bleed !

A heavy weight of hours has chained and  
 bowed

One too like thee : tameless, and swift,  
 and proud.

## V

Make me thy lyre, even as the forest is :  
 What if my leaves are falling like its own !  
 The tumult of thy mighty harmonies

Will take from both a deep, autumnal  
 tone,

Sweet thought in sadness. Be thou, spirit  
 fierce,

My spirit ! Be thou me, impetuous one !

Drive my dead thoughts over the universe  
 Like withered leaves to quicken a new  
 birth !

And, by the incantation of this verse,

Scatter, as from an unextinguished hearth  
 Ashes and sparks, my words among man-  
 kind !

Be through my lips to unawakened earth

The trumpet of a prophecy ! O, wind,  
 If Winter comes, can Spring be far be-  
 hind ? 1819. 1820.

## THE INDIAN SERENADE

I ARISE from dreams of thee  
 In the first sweet sleep of night,  
 When the winds are breathing low,  
 And the stars are shining bright :  
 I arise from dreams of thee,  
 And a spirit in my feet  
 Hath led me — who knows how !  
 To thy chamber window, Sweet !

The wandering airs they faint  
 On the dark, the silent stream —  
 And the Champak odors fail  
 Like sweet thoughts in a dream ;  
 The nightingale's complaint,  
 It dies upon her heart ; —  
 As I must on thine,  
 O ! beloved as thou art !

Oh lift me from the grass !  
 I die ! I faint ! I fail !  
 Let thy love in kisses rain  
 On my lips and eyelids pale.  
 My cheek is cold and white, alas !  
 My heart beats loud and fast ; —  
 Oh ! press it to thine own again,  
 Where it will break at last.

1819. 1822.

## LOVE'S PHILOSOPHY

THE Fountains mingle with the River  
 And the Rivers with the Ocean,  
 The winds of Heaven mix for ever

With a sweet emotion ;  
 Nothing in the world is single ;  
 All things by a law divine  
 In one spirit meet and mingle.  
 Why not I with thine ? —

See the mountains kiss high Heaven  
 And the waves clasp one another ;  
 No sister-flower would be forgiven  
 If it disdained its brother,  
 And the sunlight clasps the earth  
 And the moonbeams kiss the sea :  
 What are all these kissings worth  
 If thou kiss not me ?

1819. 1819.

PROMETHEUS UNBOUND<sup>1</sup>

## A LYRICAL DRAMA IN FOUR ACTS

AUDISNE HAEC AMPHIARAE, SUB TERRAM ABDITE?

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

PROMETHEUS	MERCURY	} Oceanides
DEMOGORGON	HERCULES	
JUPITER	ASIA	
THE EARTH	PANTHEA	
OCEAN	IONE	
APOLLO		
THE PHANTASM OF JUPITER		
THE SPIRIT OF THE EARTH		
THE SPIRIT OF THE MOON		
SPIRITS OF THE HOURS		
SPIRITS. ECHOES. FAUNS. FURIES		

## ACT I

SCENE — A RAVINE OF ICY ROCKS IN THE  
INDIAN CAUCASUS.

PROMETHEUS *is discovered bound to the Precipice. PANTHEA and IONE are seated at his feet. Time, night. During the Scene, morning slowly breaks.*

*Prometheus.* Monarch of Gods and Demons, and all Spirits

But One, who throng those bright and rolling worlds

Which Thou and I alone of living things Behold with sleepless eyes! regard this Earth

Made multitudinous with thy slaves, whom thou

Requiest for knee-worship, prayer, and praise,

And toil, and hecatombs of broken hearts,

With fear and self-contempt and barren hope.

Whilst me, who am thy foe, eyeless in hate, Hast thou made reign and triumph, to thy scorn

O'er mine own misery and thy vain revenge.

Three thousand years of sleep-unsheltered hours,

And moments aye divided by keen pangs Till they seemed years, torture and solitude,

Scorn and despair, — these are mine empire; —

More glorious far than that which thou surveyest

From thine unenvied throne, O, Mighty God!

Almighty, had I deigned to share the shame

Of thine ill tyranny, and hung not here Nailed to this wall of eagle-baffling

mountain,

Black, wintry, dead, unmeasured; without herb,

Insect, or beast, or shape or sound of life. Ah me! alas, pain, pain ever, for ever!

No change, no pause, no hope! Yet I endure.

I ask the Earth, have not the mountains felt?

I ask yon Heaven, the all-beholding Sun, Has it not seen? The Sea, in storm or

calm,

Heaven's ever-changing Shadow, spread below,

Have its deaf waves not heard my agony? Ah me! alas, pain, pain ever, for ever!

The crawling glaciers pierce me with the spears

Of their moon-freezing crystals, the bright chains

Eat with their burning cold into my bones,

Heaven's wingèd hound, polluting from thy lips

His beak in poison not his own, tears up My heart; and shapeless sights come

wandering by,

The ghastly people of the realm of dream, Mocking me: and the Earthquake-fiends

are charged

To wrench the rivets from my quivering wounds

When the rocks split and close again behind:

While from their loud abysses howling through

The genii of the storm, urging the rage Of whirlwind, and afflict me with keen hail.

<sup>1</sup> See note at the end of the poem.

And yet to me welcome is day and  
 night,  
 Whether one breaks the hoar frost of the  
 morn,  
 Or starry, dim, and slow, the other  
 climbs  
 The leaden-colored east; for then they  
 lead  
 The wingless, crawling hours, one among  
 whom  
 — As some dark Priest hailes the reluctant  
 victim —  
 Shall drag thee, cruel King, to kiss the  
 blood  
 From these pale feet, which then might  
 trample thee  
 If they disdained not such a prostrate  
 slave.  
 Disdain! Ah no! I pity thee. What  
 ruin  
 Will hunt thee undefended thro' the wide  
 Heaven!  
 How will thy soul, cloven to its depth  
 with terror,  
 Gape like a hell within! I speak in grief,  
 Not exultation, for I hate no more,  
 As then ere misery made me wise. The  
 curse  
 Once breathed on thee I would recall.  
 Ye Mountains,  
 Whose many-voicèd Echoes, through the  
 mist  
 Of cataracts, flung the thunder of that  
 spell!  
 Ye icy Springs, stagnant with wrinkling  
 frost,  
 Which vibrated to hear me, and then  
 crept  
 Shuddering thro' India! Thou serenest  
 Air,  
 Thro' which the Sun walks burning with-  
 out beams!  
 And ye swift Whirlwinds, who on poisèd  
 wings  
 Hung mute and moveless o'er yon hushed  
 abyss,  
 As thunder, louder than your own, made  
 rock  
 The orbèd world! If then my words had  
 power,  
 Though I am changed so that aught evil  
 wish  
 Is dead within; although no memory be  
 Of what is hate, let them not lose it now!  
 What was that curse? for ye all heard  
 me speak.

*First Voice (from the Mountains)*

Thrice three hundred thousand years  
 O'er the Earthquake's couch we stood:  
 Oft, as men convulsed with fears,  
 We trembled in our multitude.

*Second Voice (from the Springs)*

Thunderbolts had parched our water,  
 We had been stained with bitter blood,  
 And had run mute, 'mid shrieks of  
 slaughter,  
 Thro' a city and a solitude.

*Third Voice (from the Air)*

I had clothed, since Earth uprose,  
 Its wastes in colors not their own,  
 And oft had my serene repose  
 Been cloven by many a rending groan.

*Fourth Voice (from the Whirlwinds)*

We had soared beneath these mountains  
 Unresting ages; nor had thunder,  
 Nor yon volcano's flaming fountains,  
 Nor any power above or under  
 Ever made us mute with wonder.

*First Voice*

But never bowed our snowy crest  
 As at the voice of thine unrest.

*Second Voice*

Never such a sound before  
 To the Indian waves we bore.  
 A pilot asleep on the howling sea  
 Leaped up from the deck in agony,  
 And heard, and cried, "Ah, woe is me!"  
 And died as mad as the wild waves be.

*Third Voice*

By such dread words from Earth to  
 Heaven  
 My still realm was never riven;  
 When its wound was closed, there stood  
 Darkness o'er the day like blood.

*Fourth Voice*

And we shrank back; for dreams of ruin  
 To frozen caves our flight pursuing  
 Made us keep silence — thus — and  
 thus —  
 Though silence is a hell to us.

*The Earth.* The tongueless Caverns of  
the craggy hills  
Cried "Misery!" then; the hollow  
Heaven replied,  
"Misery!" and the Ocean's purple  
waves,  
Climbing the land, howled to the lashing  
winds,  
And the pale nations heard it, "Misery!"

*Prometheus.* I hear a sound of voices:  
not the voice  
Which I gave forth. Mother, thy sons  
and thou  
Scorn him, without whose all-enduring  
will

Beneath the fierce omnipotence of Jove,  
Both they and thou had vanished, like  
thin mist

Unrolled on the morning wind. Know ye  
not me,

The Titan? He who made his agony  
The barrier to your else all-conquering  
foe?

Oh, rock-embosomed lawns, and snow-  
fed streams,

Now seem athwart frore vapors, deep  
below,

Thro' whose o'ershadowing woods I  
wandered once

With Asia, drinking life from her loved  
eyes;

Why scorns the spirit which informs ye,  
now

To commune with me? me alone, who  
checked,

As one who checks a fiend-drawn  
charioteer,

The falsehood and the force of him who  
reigns

Supreme, and with the groans of pining  
slaves

Fills your dim glens and liquid wilder-  
nesses:

Why answer ye not, still? Brethren!

*The Earth* They dare not.

*Prometheus.* Who dares? for I would  
hear that curse again.

Ha, what an awful whisper rises up!  
'Tis scarce like sound; it tingles thro'  
the frame

As lightning tingles, hovering ere it  
strike.

Speak, Spirit! from thine inorganic voice  
I only know that thou art moving near  
And love. How cursed I him?

*The Earth.* How canst thou hear

Who knowest not the language of the  
dead?

*Prometheus.* Thou art a living spirit:  
speak as they.

*The Earth.* I dare not speak like life,  
lest Heaven's fell King

Should hear, and link me to some wheel  
of pain

More torturing than the one whereon I  
roll.

Subtle thou art and good, and tho' the  
Gods

Hear not this voice, yet thou art more  
than God

Being wise and kind: earnestly hearken  
now.

*Prometheus.* Obscurely thro' my brain,  
like shadows dim,

Sweep awful thoughts, rapid and thick.  
I feel

Faint, like one mingled in entwining love;  
Yet 'tis not pleasure.

*The Earth.* No, thou canst not hear;  
Thou art immortal, and this tongue is  
known

Only to those who die.

*Prometheus.* And what art thou,  
O, melancholy Voice?

*The Earth.* I am the Earth,  
Thy mother; she within whose stony  
veins,

To the last fibre of the loftiest tree  
Whose thin leaves trembled in the frozen  
air,

Joy ran, as blood within a living frame,  
When thou didst from her bosom, like a  
cloud

Of glory arise, a spirit of keen joy!  
And at thy voice her pining sens uplifted

Their prostrate brows from the polluting  
dust.

And our almighty Tyrant with fierce  
dread

Grew pale, until his thunder chained thee  
here.

Then, see those million worlds which  
burn and roll

Around us: their inhabitants beheld  
My sphered light wane in wide Heaven;  
the sea

Was lifted by strange tempest, and new  
fire

From earthquake-rifted mountains of  
bright snow

Shook its portentous hair beneath  
Heaven's frown;



Lightning and Inundation vexed the  
 plains;  
 Blue thistles bloomed in cities; foodless  
 toads  
 Within voluptuous chambers panting  
 crawled:  
 When Plague had fallen on man, and  
 beast and worm,  
 And Famine; and black blight on herb  
 and tree;  
 And in the corn, and vines, and meadow-  
 grass,  
 Teemed ineradicable poisonous weeds  
 Draining their growth, for my wan breast  
 was dry  
 With grief; and the thin air, my breath,  
 was stained  
 With the contagion of a mother's hate  
 Breathed on her child's destroyer; aye,  
 I heard  
 Thy curse, the which, if thou rememberest  
 not,  
 Yet my innumerable seas and streams,  
 Mountains, and caves, and winds, and  
 yon wide air,  
 And the inarticulate people of the dead,  
 Preserve, a treasured spell. We meditate  
 In secret joy and hope those dreadful  
 words  
 But dare not speak them.

*Prometheus.* Venerable mother!

All else who live and suffer take from  
 thee  
 Some comfort; flowers, and fruits, and  
 happy sounds,  
 And love, though fleeting; these may  
 not be mine.  
 But mine own words, I pray, deny me  
 not.

*The Earth.* They shall be told. Ere  
 Babylon was dust,

The Magus Zoroaster, my dead child,  
 Met his own image walking in the garden.  
 That apparition, sole of men, he saw.  
 For know there are two worlds of life and  
 death:  
 One that which thou beholdest; but the  
 other  
 Is underneath the grave, where do in-  
 habit  
 The shadows of all forms that think and  
 live  
 Till death unite them and they part no  
 more;  
 Dreams and the light imaginings of men,  
 And all that fate creates or love desires,

Terrible, strange, sublime and beauteous  
 shapes.

There thou art, and dost hang, a writhing  
 shade,

'Mid whirlwind-peopled mountains; all  
 the gods

Are there, and all the powers of nameless  
 worlds,

Vast, sceptred phantoms; heroes, men,  
 and beasts;

And Demogorgon, a tremendous gloom;  
 And he, the supreme Tyrant, on his  
 throne

Of burning gold. Son, one of these shall  
 utter

The curse which all remember. Call at will  
 Thine own ghost, or the ghost of Jupiter,  
 Hades or Typhon, or what mightier Gods  
 From all-prolific Evil, since thy ruin  
 Have sprung, and trampled on my pro-  
 strate sons.

Ask, and they must reply: so the revenge  
 Of the Supreme may sweep thro' vacant  
 shades,

As rainy wind thro' the abandoned gate  
 Of a fallen palace.

*Prometheus.* Mother, let not aught  
 Of that which may be evil, pass again  
 My lips, or those of aught resembling me.  
 Phantasm of Jupiter, arise, appear!

#### *Ione*

My wings are folded o'er mine ears:  
 My wings are crossèd o'er mine eyes:  
 Yet thro' their silver shade appears,  
 And thro' their lulling plumes arise,  
 A Shape, a throng of sounds;  
 May it be no ill to thee  
 O thou of many wounds!  
 Near whom, for our sweet sister's sake,  
 Ever thus we watch and wake.

#### *Panthea*

The sound is of whirlwind under-  
 ground,  
 Earthquake, and fire, and mountains  
 cloven;  
 The shape is awful like the sound,  
 Clothed in dark purple, star-inwoven.  
 A sceptre of pale gold  
 To stay steps proud, o'er the slow  
 cloud  
 His veined hand doth hold.  
 Cruel he looks, but calm and strong,  
 Like one who does, not suffers wrong.

*Phantasm of Jupiter.* Why have the  
secret powers of this strange world  
Driven me, a frail and empty phantom,  
hither

On direst storms? What unaccustomed  
sounds

Are hovering on my lips, unlike the voice  
With which our pallid race hold ghastly  
talk

In darkness? And, proud sufferer, who  
art thou?

*Prometheus.* Tremendous Image, as  
thou art must be

He whom thou shadowest forth. I am  
his foe,

The Titan. Speak the words which I  
would hear,

Although no thought inform thine empty  
voice.

*The Earth.* Listen! And tho' your  
echoes must be mute,

Gray mountains, and old woods, and  
haunted springs,

Prophetic caves, and isle-surrounding  
streams,

Rejoice to hear what yet ye cannot speak.

*Phantasm.* A spirit seizes me and  
speaks within :

It tears me as fire tears a thunder-cloud.

*Panthea.* See, how he lifts his mighty  
looks, the Heaven

Darkens above.

*Ione.* He speaks! O shelter me!

*Prometheus.* I see the curse on  
gestures proud and cold,

And looks of firm defiance, and calm  
hate,

And such despair as mocks itself with  
smiles,

Written as on a scroll: yet speak: Oh,  
speak!

### *Phantasm*

Fiend, I defy thee! with a calm, fixed  
mind,

All that thou canst inflict I bid thee  
do;

Foul Tyrant both of Gods and Human-  
kind,

One only being shalt thou not sub-  
due.

Rain then thy plagues upon me here,  
Ghastly disease, and frenzying fear;

And let alternate frost and fire

Eat into me, and be thine ire

Lightning, and cutting hail, and legioned  
forms  
Of furies, driving by upon the wounding  
storms.

Ay, do thy worst. Thou art omnipo-  
tent.

O'er all things but thyself I gave thee  
power,

And my own will. Be thy swift mis-  
chiefs sent

To blast mankind, from yon ethereal  
tower.

Let thy malignant spirit move

In darkness over those I love:

On me and mine I imprecate

The utmost torture of thy hate;

And thus devote to sleepless agony,  
This undeclining head, while thou must  
reign on high.

But thou, who art the God and Lord:

O, thou,

Who fillest with thy soul this world  
of woe,

To whom all things of Earth and  
Heaven do bow

In fear and worship: all-prevailing  
foe!

I curse thee! let a sufferer's curse

Clasp thee, his torturer, like remorse;

Till thine Infinity shall be

A robe of envenomed agony;

And thine Omnipotence a crown of pain,  
To cling like burning gold round thy dis-  
solving brain.

Heap on thy soul, by virtue of this  
Curse

Ill deeds, then be thou damned, be-  
holding good;

Both infinite as is the universe,

And thou, and thy self-torturing soli-  
tude.

An awful image of calm power

Though now thou sittest, let the hour

Come, when thou must appear to be

That which thou art internally.

And after many a false and fruitless  
crime

Scorn track thy lagging fall thro' bound-  
less space and time.

*Prometheus.* Were these my words,  
O, Parent?

*The Earth.* They were thine.

*Prometheus.* It doth repent me : words  
are quick and vain ;  
Grief for awhile is blind, and so was  
mine.  
I wish no living thing to suffer pain.

*The Earth*

Misery, Oh misery to me,  
That Jove at length should vanquish  
thee.

Wail, howl aloud, Land and Sea,  
The Earth's rent heart shall answer ye.  
Howl, Spirits of the living and the  
dead,  
Your refuge, your defence lies fallen and  
vanquishèd.

*First Echo*

Lies fallen and vanquishèd !

*Second Echo*

Fallen and vanquishèd !

*Ione*

Fear not : 'tis but some passing spasm  
The Titan is unvanquished still.  
But see, where thro' the azure chasm  
Of yon forked and snowy hill  
Trampling the slant winds on high  
With golden-sandalled feet, that  
glow  
Under plumes of purple dye,  
Like rose-ensanguined ivory,  
A Shape comes now,  
Stretching on high from his right hand  
A serpent-cinctured wand.

*Panthea.* 'Tis Jove's world-wandering  
herald, Mercury.

*Ione*

And who are those with hydra tresses  
And iron wings that climb the wind,  
Whom the frowning God represses  
Like vapors streaming up behind,  
Clanging loud, an endless crowd —

*Panthea*

These are Jove's tempest-walking  
hounds,  
Whom he gluts with groans and blood,  
When charioted on sulphurous cloud  
He bursts Heaven's bounds.

*Ione*

Are they now led, from the thin dead  
On new pangs to be fed ?

*Panthea*

The Titan looks as ever, firm, not proud.

*First Fury.* Ha ! I scent life !

*Second Fury.* Let me but look into his  
eyes !

*Third Fury.* The hope of torturing  
him smells like a heap  
Of corpses, to a death-bird after battle.

*First Fury.* Darest thou delay, O  
Herald ! take cheer, Hounds  
Of Hell : what if the Son of Maia soon  
Should make us food and sport — who  
can please long  
The Omnipotent ?

*Mercury.* Back to your towers of  
iron,  
And gnash, beside the streams of fire  
and wail,  
Your foodless teeth. Geryon, arise !  
and Gorgon,

Chimæra, and thou Sphinx, subtlest of  
fiends  
Who ministered to Thebes Heaven's  
poisoned wine,  
Unnatural love, and more unnatural  
hate :

These shall perform your task.

*First Fury.* Oh, mercy ! mercy !  
We die with our desire : drive us not  
back !

*Mercury.* Crouch then in silence.

Awful Sufferer

To thee unwilling, most unwillingly  
I come, by the great Father's will driven  
down,

To execute a doom of new revenge.

Alas ! I pity thee, and hate myself  
That I can do no more : aye from thy  
sight

Returning, for a season, Heaven seems  
Hell,

So thy worn form pursues me night and  
day,

Smiling reproach. Wise art thou, firm  
and good,

But vainly wouldst stand forth alone in  
strife

Against the Omnipotent ; as yon clear  
lamps

That measure and divide the weary years

From which there is no refuge, long have  
taught  
And long must teach. Even now thy  
Torturer arms  
With the strange might of unimagined  
pains  
The powers who scheme slow agonies in  
Hell,  
And my commission is to lead them here,  
Or what more subtle, foul, or savage  
fiends  
People the abyss, and leave them to their  
task.  
Be it not so! there is a secret known  
To thee, and to none else of living things,  
Which may transfer the sceptre of wide  
Heaven,  
The fear of which perplexes the Su-  
preme:  
Clothe it in words, and bid it clasp his  
throne  
In intercession; bend thy soul in prayer,  
And like a suppliant in some gorgeous  
fane,  
Let the will kneel within thy haughty  
heart:  
For benefits and meek submission tame  
The fiercest and the mightiest.  
*Prometheus.* Evil minds  
Change good to their own nature. I  
gave all  
He has; and in return he chains me here  
Years, ages, night and day: whether the  
Sun  
Split my parched skin, or in the moony  
night  
The crystal-wingèd snow cling round my  
hair:  
Whilst my belovèd race is trampled down  
By his thought-executing ministers.  
Such is the tyrant's recompense: 'tis  
just:  
He who is evil can receive no good;  
And for a world bestowed, or a friend lost,  
He can feel hate, fear, shame; not grati-  
tude:  
He but requites me for his own misdeed.  
Kindness to such is keen reproach, which  
breaks  
With bitter stings the light sleep of  
Revenge.  
Submission, thou dost know I cannot  
try:  
For what submission but that fatal word,  
The death-seal of mankind's captivity,  
Like the Sicilian's hair-suspended sword,

Which trembles o'er his crown, would he  
accept,  
Or could I yield? Which yet I will not  
yield.  
Let others flatter Crime, where it sits  
throned  
In brief Omnipotence: secure are they:  
For Justice, when triumphant, will weep  
down  
Pity, not punishment, on her own wrongs,  
Too much avenged by those who err. I  
wait,  
Enduring thus, the retributive hour  
Which since we spake is even nearer  
now.  
But hark, the hell-hounds clamor: fear  
delay:  
Behold! Heaven lowers under thy  
Father's frown.  
*Mercury.* Oh, that we might be spared  
I to inflict  
And thou to suffer! Once more answer  
me:  
Thou knowest not the period of Jove's  
power?  
*Prometheus.* I know but this, that it  
must come.  
*Mercury.* Alas!  
Thou canst not count thy years to come of  
pain?  
*Prometheus.* They last while Jove  
must reign: nor more, nor less  
Do I desire or fear.  
*Mercury.* Yet pause, and plunge  
Into Eternity, where recorded time,  
Even all that we imagine, age on age,  
Seems but a point, and the reluctant  
mind  
Flags wearily in its unending flight,  
Till it sink, dizzy, blind, lost, shelterless;  
Perchance it has not numbered the slow  
years  
Which thou must spend in torture, unre-  
prieved?  
*Prometheus.* Perchance no thought  
can count them, yet they pass.  
*Mercury.* If thou might'st dwell  
among the Gods the while  
Lapped in voluptuous joy?  
*Prometheus.* I would not quit  
This bleak ravine, these unrepentant  
pains.  
*Mercury.* Alas! I wonder at, yet  
pity thee.  
*Prometheus.* Pity the self-despising  
slaves of Heaven,

Not me, within whose mind sits peace  
serene,  
As light in the sun, throned: how vain is  
talk!

Call up the fiends.

*Ione.* O, sister, look! White fire  
Has cloven to the roots yon huge snow-  
loaded cedar;  
How fearfully God's thunder howls  
behind!

*Mercury.* I must obey his words and  
thine: alas!

Most heavily remorse hangs at my heart!

*Panthea.* See where the child of  
Heaven, with winged feet,  
Runs down the slanted sunlight of the  
dawn.

*Ione.* Dear sister, close thy plumes  
over thine eyes

Lest thou behold and die: they come:  
they come

Blackening the birth of day with count-  
less wings,

And hollow underneath, like death.

*First Fury.* Prometheus!

*Second Fury.* Immortal Titan!

*Third Fury.* Champion of  
Heaven's slaves!

*Prometheus.* He whom some dreadful  
voice invokes is here,

Prometheus, the chained Titan. Hor-  
rible forms,

What and who are ye? Never yet there  
came

Phantasms so foul thro' monster-teeming  
Hell

From the all-miscreative brain of Jove;  
Whilst I behold such execrable shapes,

Methinks I grow like what I contem-  
plate,

And laugh and stare in loathsome sym-  
pathy.

*First Fury.* We are the ministers of  
pain, and fear,

And disappointment, and mistrust, and  
hate,

And clinging crime; and as lean dogs  
pursue

Thro' wood and lake some struck and  
sobbing fawn,

We track all things that weep, and bleed,  
and live,

When the great King betrays them to our  
will.

*Prometheus.* Oh! many fearful na-  
tures in one name,

I know ye; and these lakes and echoes  
know

The darkness and the clangor of your  
wings.

But why more hideous than your loathed  
selves

Gather ye up in legions from the deep?

*Second Fury.* We knew not that:  
Sisters, rejoice, rejoice!

*Prometheus.* Can aught exult in its  
deformity?

*Second Fury.* The beauty of delight  
makes lovers glad,

Gazing on one another: so are we.

As from the rose which the pale priestess  
kneels

To gather for her festal crown of flowers  
The ærial crimson falls, flushing her  
cheek,

So from our victim's destined agony

The shade which is our form invests us  
round,

Else we are shapeless as our mother  
Night.

*Prometheus.* I laugh your power, and  
his who sent you here,

To lowest scorn. Pour forth the cup of  
pain.

*First Fury.* Thou thinkest we will  
rend thee bone from bone,

And nerve from nerve, working like fire  
within?

*Prometheus.* Pain is my element, as  
hate is thine;

Ye rend me now: I care not.

*Second Fury.* Dost imagine  
We will but laugh into thy lidless eyes?

*Prometheus.* I weigh not what ye do,  
but what ye suffer,

Being evil. Cruel was the power which  
called

You, or aught else so wretched, into light.

*Third Fury.* Thou think'st we will  
live thro' thee, one by one,

Like animal life, and tho' we can obscure  
not

The soul which burns within, that we  
will dwell

Beside it, like a vain loud multitude

Vexing the self-content of wisest men:  
That we will be dread thought beneath  
thy brain,

And foul desire round thine astonished  
heart,

And blood within thy labyrinthine veins  
Crawling like agony.



*Prometheus.* Why, ye are thus now;  
Yet am I king over myself, and rule  
The torturing and conflicting throngs  
within,  
As Jove rules you when Hell grows  
mutinous.

*Chorus of Furies*

From the ends of the earth, from the  
ends of the earth,  
Where the night has its grave and the  
morning its birth,  
Come, come, come!  
Oh, ye who shake hills with the scream of  
your mirth,  
When cities sink howling in ruin; and ye  
Who with wingless footsteps trample  
the sea,  
And close upon Shipwreck and Famine's  
track,  
Sit chattering with joy on the foodless  
wreck,

Come, come, come!

Leave the bed, low, cold, and red,  
Strewed beneath a nation dead;  
Leave the hatred, as in ashes

Fire is left for future burning:

It will burst in bloodier fashion,

When ye stir it, soon returning:

Leave the self-contempt implanted

In young spirits, sense-enchanted,

Misery's yet unkindled fuel:

Leave Hell's secrets half unchanted

To the maniac dreamer; cruel

More than ye can be with hate

Is he with fear.

Come, come, come!

We are steaming up from Hell's wide gate,  
And we burthen the blast of the atmos-  
phere,

But vainly we toil till ye come here.

*Ione.* Sister, I hear the thunder of  
new wings.

*Panthea.* These solid mountains  
quiver with the sound

Even as the tremulous air: their shadows  
make

The space within my plumes more black  
than night.

*First Fury*

Your call was as a winged car  
Driven on whirlwinds fast and far;  
It rapt us from red gulf of war.

*Second Fury*

From wide cities, famine-wasted;

*Third Fury*

Groans half heard, and blood untasted;

*Fourth Fury*

Kingly conclaves stern and cold,  
Where blood with gold is bought and  
sold;

*Fifth Fury*

From the furnace, white and hot,  
In which —

*A Fury*

Speak not: whisper not:  
I know all that ye would tell,  
But to speak might break the spell  
Which must bend the Invincible,  
The stern of thought;  
He yet defies the deepest power of Hell.

*Fury*

Tear the veil!

*Another Fury*

It is torn.

*Chorus*

The pale stars of the morn  
Shine on a misery, dire to be borne.  
Dost thou faint, mighty Titan? We laugh  
thee to scorn.

Dost thou boast the clear knowledge thou  
waken'dst for man?

Then was kindled within him a thirst  
which outran

Those perishing waters; a thirst of fierce  
fever,

Hope, love, doubt, desire, which consume  
him for ever.

One came forth of gentle worth  
Smiling on the sanguine earth;  
His words outlived him, like swift  
poison,

Withering up truth, peace, and pity.  
Look! where round the wide horizon

Many a million-peopled city

Vomits smoke in the bright air.

Mark that outcry of despair!

'Tis his mild and gentle ghost

Wailing for the faith he kindled:

Look again, the flames almost

To a glow-worm's lamp have dwindle:

The survivors round the embers  
 Gather in dread.  
 Joy, joy, joy!  
 Past ages crowd on thee, but each one  
 remembers,  
 And the future is dark, and the present  
 is spread  
 Like a pillow of thorns for thy slumberless  
 head.

*Semichorus I*

Drops of bloody agony flow  
 From his white and quivering brow.  
 Grant a little respite now :  
 See a disenchanted nation  
 Springs like day from desolation ;  
 To Truth its state is dedicate,  
 And Freedom leads it forth, her mate ;  
 A legions band of linked brothers  
 Whom Love calls children —

*Semichorus II*

'Tis another's :  
 See how kindred murder kin :  
 'Tis the vintage time for death and sin ;  
 Blood, like new wine, bubbles within ;  
 Till Despair smothers  
 The struggling world, which slaves and  
 tyrants win.  
 [All the FURIES vanish, except one.

*Ione.* Hark, sister! what a low yet  
 dreadful groan  
 Quite unsuppressed is tearing up the heart  
 Of the good Titan, as storms tear the deep,  
 And beasts hear the sea moan in inland  
 caves.

Darest thou observe how the fiends  
 torture him?

*Panthea.* Alas! I looked forth twice,  
 but will no more.

*Ione.* What didst thou see?

*Panthea.* A woful sight: a youth  
 With patient looks nailed to a crucifix.

*Ione.* What next?

*Panthea.* The heaven around, the  
 earth below  
 Was peopled with thick shapes of human  
 death,  
 All horrible, and wrought by human  
 hands,  
 And some appeared the work of human  
 hearts,  
 For men were slowly killed by frowns and  
 smiles;

And other sights too foul to speak and  
 live  
 Were wandering by. Let us not tempt  
 worse fear

By looking forth: those groans are grief  
 enough.

*Fury.* Behold an emblem: those who  
 do endure  
 Deep wrongs for man, and scorn, and  
 chains, but heap  
 Thousandfold torment on themselves  
 and him.

*Prometheus.* Remit the anguish of  
 that lighted stare;  
 Close those wan lips; let that thorn-  
 wounded brow  
 Stream not with blood; it mingles with  
 thy tears!

Fix, fix those tortured orbs in peace and  
 death,  
 So thy sick throes shake not that cruci-  
 fix,  
 So those pale fingers play not with thy  
 gore.

O, horrible! Thy name I will not speak,  
 It hath become a curse. I see, I see  
 The wise, the mild, the lofty, and the  
 just,

Whom thy slaves hate for being like to  
 thee,

Some hunted by foul lies from their  
 heart's home,

An early-chosen, late-lamented home;  
 As hooded ounces cling to the driven  
 hind;

Some linked to corpses in unwholesome  
 cells:

Some — Hear I not the multitude laugh  
 loud? —

Impaled in lingering fire: and mighty  
 realms

Float by my feet, like sea-uprooted isles,  
 Whose sons are kneaded down in common  
 blood

By the red light of their own burning  
 homes.

*Fury.* Blood thou canst see, and fire;  
 and canst hear groans;

Worse things, unheard, unseen, remain  
 behind.

*Prometheus.* Worse?

*Fury.* In each human heart  
 terror survives

The ruin it has gorged: the loftiest fear  
 All that they would disdain to think were  
 true:

Hypocrisy and custom make their minds  
The fanes of many a worship, now out-  
worn.

They dare not devise good for man's  
estate,

And yet they know not that they do not  
dare.

The good want power, but to weep barren  
tears.

The powerful goodness want: worse  
need for them.

The wise want love; and those who love  
want wisdom;

And all best things are thus confused to  
ill.

Many are strong and rich, and would be  
just,

But live among their suffering fellow-men  
As if none felt: they know not what they  
do.

*Prometheus.* Thy words are like a  
cloud of wingèd snakes;

And yet I pity those they torture not.  
*Fury.* Thou pitiest them? I speak  
no more! [*Vanishes.*]

*Prometheus.* Ah woe!

Ah woe! Alas! pain, pain ever, for  
ever!

I close my tearless eyes, but see more  
clear

Thy works within my woe-illumèd mind,  
Thou subtle tyrant! Peace is in the  
grave.

The grave hides all things beautiful and  
good:

I am a God and cannot find it there,  
Nor would I seek it: for, though dread  
revenge,

This is defeat, fierce king, not victory.  
The sights with which thou torturest gird  
my soul

With new endurance, till the hour arrives  
When they shall be no types of things  
which are.

*Panthea.* Alas! what sawest thou?

*Prometheus.* There are two woes:  
To speak, and to behold; thou spare me  
one.

Names are there, Nature's sacred watch-  
words, they

Were borne aloft in bright emblazonry;  
The nations thronged around, and cried  
aloud,

As with one voice, Truth, liberty, and  
love!

Suddenly fierce confusion fell from heaven

Among them: there was strife, deceit,  
and fear:

Tyrants rushed in, and did divide the  
spoil.

This was the shadow of the truth I saw.  
*The Earth.* I felt thy torture, son,

with such mixed joy  
As pain and virtue give. To cheer thy  
state

I bid ascend those subtle and fair spirits,  
Whose homes are the dim caves of human  
thought,

And who inhabit, as birds wing the wind,  
Its world-surrounding ether: they behold  
Beyond that twilight realm, as in a glass,  
The future: may they speak comfort to  
thee!

*Panthea.* Look, sister, where a troop  
of spirits gather,

Like flocks of clouds in spring's delightful  
weather,

Thronging in the blue air!

*Ione.* And see! more come,  
Like fountain-vapors when the winds are  
dumb,

That climb up the ravine in scattered lines.  
And, hark! is it the music of the pines?  
Is it the lake? Is it the waterfall?

*Panthea.* 'Tis something sadder,  
sweeter far than all.

### *Chorus of Spirits*

From unremembered ages we  
Gentle guides and guardians be  
Of heaven-oppressed mortality;  
And we breathe, and sicken not,  
The atmosphere of human thought.

Be it dim, and dank, and gray,  
Like a storm-extinguished day,  
Travelled o'er by dying gleams;

Be it bright as all between  
Cloudless skies and windless streams,  
Silent, liquid, and serene;

As the birds within the wind,  
As the fish within the wave,  
As the thoughts of man's own mind

Float thro' all above the grave;  
We make there our liquid lair,  
Voyaging cloudlike and unpent

Thro' the boundless element:  
Thence we bear the prophecy  
Which begins and ends in thee!

*Ione.* More yet come, one by one:  
the air around them

Looks radiant as the air around a star.

*First Spirit*

On a battle-trumpet's blast  
 I fled hither, fast, fast, fast,  
 'Mid the darkness upward cast.  
 From the dust of creeds outworn,  
 From the tyrant's banner torn,  
 Gathering 'round me, onward borne,  
 There was mingled many a cry —  
 Freedom! Hope! Death! Victory!  
 Till they faded thro' the sky;  
 And one sound, above, around,  
 One sound beneath, around, above,  
 Was moving; 'twas the soul of love;  
 'Twas the hope, the prophecy,  
 Which begins and ends in thee.

*Second Spirit*

A rainbow's arch stood on the sea,  
 Which rocked beneath, immovably;  
 And the triumphant storm did flee,  
 Like a conqueror, swift and proud,  
 Between, with many a captive cloud,  
 A shapeless, dark and rapid crowd,  
 Each by lightning riven in half:  
 I heard the thunder hoarsely laugh:  
 Mighty fleets were strewn like chaff  
 And spread beneath a hell of death  
 O'er the white waters. I alit  
 On a great ship lightning-split,  
 And speeded hither on the sigh  
 Of one who gave an enemy  
 His plank, then plunged aside to die.

*Third Spirit*

I sate beside a sage's bed,  
 And the lamp was burning red  
 Near the book where he had fed,  
 When a Dream with plumes of flame,  
 To his pillow hovering came,  
 And I knew it was the same  
 Which had kindled long ago  
 Pity, eloquence, and woe;  
 And the world awhile below  
 Wore the shade its lustre made.  
 It has borne me here as fleet  
 As Desire's lightning feet;  
 I must ride it back ere morrow,  
 Or the sage will wake in sorrow.

*Fourth Spirit*

On a poet's lips I slept  
 Dreaming like a love-adept  
 In the sound his breathing kept;

Nor seeks nor finds he mortal blisses,  
 But feeds on the ærial kisses  
 Of shapes that haunt thought's wildernesses.

He will watch from dawn to gloom  
 The lake-reflected sun illumine  
 The yellow bees in the ivy-bloom,  
 Nor heed nor see, what things they be;  
 But from these create he can  
 Forms more real than living man,  
 Nurslings of immortality!  
 One of these awakened me,  
 And I sped to succor thee.

*Ione*

Behold'st thou not two shapes from the  
 east and west  
 Come, as two doves to one beloved nest,  
 Twin nurslings of the all-sustaining air  
 On swift still wings glide down the atmosphere?  
 And, hark! their sweet, sad voices! 'tis  
 despair  
 Mingled with love and then dissolved in  
 sound.

*Panthea.* Canst thou speak, sister?  
 all my words are drowned.

*Ione.* Their beauty gives me voice.  
 See how they float  
 On their sustaining wings of skiey grain,  
 Orange and azure deepening into gold:  
 Their soft smiles light the air like a star's  
 fire.

*Chorus of Spirits*

Hast thou beheld the form of love?

*Fifth Spirit*

As over wide dominions  
 I sped, like some swift cloud that wings  
 the wide air's wildernesses,  
 That planet-crested shape swept by on  
 lightning-braided pinions,  
 Scattering the liquid joy of life from his  
 ambrosial tresses:  
 His footsteps paved the world with light;  
 but as I past 'twas fading,  
 And hollow Ruin yawned behind: great  
 sages bound in madness,  
 And headless patriots, and pale youths  
 who perished, unupbraiding,  
 Gleamed in the night. I wandered o'er,  
 till thou, O King of sadness,  
 Turned by thy smile the worst I saw to  
 recollected gladness.

*Sixth Spirit*

Ah, sister! Desolation is a delicate thing:  
 It walks not on the earth, it floats not on  
 the air,  
 But treads with killing footstep, and  
 fans with silent wing  
 The tender hopes which in their hearts  
 the best and gentlest bear;  
 Who, soothed to false repose by the  
 fanning plumes above  
 And the music-stirring motion of its soft  
 and busy feet,  
 Dream visions of aerial joy, and call the  
 monster, Love,  
 And wake, and find the shadow Pain,  
 as he whom now we greet.

*Chorus*

Tho' Ruin now Love's shadow be,  
 Following him, destroyingly,  
 On Death's white and winged steed  
 Which the fleetest cannot flee.  
 Trampling down both flower and weed,  
 Man and beast, and foul and fair,  
 Like a tempest thro' the air;  
 Thou shalt quell this horseman grim,  
 Woundless though in heart or limb.

*Prometheus.* Spirits! how know ye  
 this shall be?

*Chorus*

In the atmosphere we breathe,  
 As buds grow red when the snow-storms  
 flee,  
 From spring gathering up beneath,  
 Whose mild winds shake the elder brake,  
 And the wandering herdsmen know  
 That the white-thorn soon will blow:  
 Wisdom, Justice, Love, and Peace,  
 When they struggle to increase,  
 Are to us as soft winds be  
 To shepherd boys, the prophecy  
 Which begins and ends in thee.

*Ione.* Where are the Spirits fled?

*Panthea.* Only a sense  
 Remains of them, like the omnipotence  
 Of music, when the inspired voice and  
 lute  
 Languish, ere yet the responses are mute,  
 Which thro' the deep and labyrinthine  
 soul,  
 Like echoes thro' long caverns, wind and  
 roll.

*Prometheus.* How fair these airborne  
 shapes! and yet I feel  
 Most vain all hope but love; and thou  
 art far,  
 Asia! who, when my being overflowed,  
 Wert like a golden chalice to bright wine  
 Which else had sunk into the thirsty dust.  
 All things are still: alas! how heavily  
 This quiet morning weighs upon my heart;  
 Tho' I should dream I could even sleep  
 with grief

If slumber were denied not. I would fain  
 Be what it is my destiny to be,  
 The savior and the strength of suffering  
 man,  
 Or sink into the original gulf of things:  
 There is no agony, and no solace left;  
 Earth can console, Heaven can torment  
 no more.

*Panthea.* Hast thou forgotten one  
 who watches thee  
 The cold dark night, and never sleeps  
 but when  
 The shadow of thy spirit falls on her?

*Prometheus.* I said all hope was vain  
 but love: thou lovest.

*Panthea.* Deeply in truth; but the  
 eastern star looks white,  
 And Asia waits in that far Indian vale  
 The scene of her sad exile; rugged once  
 And desolate and frozen, like this ravine;  
 But now invested with fair flowers and  
 herbs,  
 And haunted by sweet airs and sounds,  
 which flow  
 Among the woods and waters, from the  
 ether  
 Of her transforming presence, which  
 would fade  
 If it were mingled not with thine. Fare-  
 well!

## ACT II

SCENE I. — *Morning. A lovely Vale in  
 the Indian Caucasus. ASIA alone.*

*Asia.* From all the blasts of heaven  
 thou hast descended:  
 Yes, like a spirit, like a thought, which  
 makes  
 Unwonted tears throng to the horny  
 eyes,  
 And beatings haunt the desolated heart,  
 Which should have learnt repose: thou  
 hast descended



Cradled in tempests; thou dost wake, O  
Spring!

O child of many winds! As suddenly  
Thou comest as the memory of a dream,  
Which now is sad because it hath been  
sweet;

Like genius, or like joy which riseth up  
As from the earth, clothing with golden  
clouds

The desert of our life.

This is the season, this the day, the hour;  
At sunrise thou shouldst come, sweet  
sister mine.

Too long desired, too long delaying,  
come!

How like death-worms the wingless mo-  
ments crawl!

The point of one white star is quivering  
still

Deep in the orange light of widening  
morn

Beyond the purple mountains: thro' a  
chasm

Of wind-divided mist the darker lake  
Reflects it: now it wanes: it gleams  
again

As the waves fade, and as the burning  
threads

Of woven cloud unravel in pale air:

'Tis lost! and thro' yon peaks of cloud-  
like snow

The roseate sunlight quivers: hear I not  
The Æolian music of her sea-green plumes  
Winnowing the crimson dawn?

[PANTHEA enters.

I feel, I see

Those eyes which burn thro' smiles that  
fade in tears,

Like stars half quenched in mists of silver  
dew.

Belovèd and most beautiful, who wearest  
The shadow of that soul by which I live,  
How late thou art! the spherèd sun had  
climbed

The sea: my heart was sick with hope,  
before

The printless air felt thy belated plumes.

Panthea. Pardon, great Sister! but  
my wings were faint

With the delight of a remembered dream,  
As are the noontide plumes of summer  
winds

Satiate with sweet flowers. I was wont  
to sleep

Peacefully, and awake refreshed and  
calm

Before the sacred Titan's fall, and thy  
Unhappy love, had made, thro' use and  
pity,

Both love and woe familiar to my heart  
As they had grown to thine: erewhile I  
slept

Under the glaucous caverns of old Ocean  
Within dim bowers of green and purple  
moss,

Our young Ione's soft and milky arms  
Locked then, as now, behind my dark,  
moist hair,

While my shut eyes and cheek were  
pressed within

The folded depth of her life-breathing  
bosom:

But not as now, since I am made the  
wind

Which fails beneath the music that I bear  
Of thy most wordless converse; since  
dissolved

Into the sense with which love talks, my  
rest

Was troubled and yet sweet; my waking  
hours

Too full of care and pain.

Asia. Lift up thine eyes,  
And let me read thy dream.

Panthea. As I have said  
With our sea-sister at his feet I slept.

The mountain mists, condensing at our  
voice

Under the moon, had spread their snowy  
flakes,

From the keen ice shielding our linkèd  
sleep.

Then two dreams came. One, I remember  
not.

But in the other his pale wound-worn  
limbs

Fell from Prometheus, and the azure  
night

Grew radiant with the glory of that form  
Which lives unchanged within and his  
voice fell

Like music which makes giddy the dim  
brain,

Faint with intoxication of keen joy:  
"Sister of her whose footsteps pave the  
world

With loveliness—more fair than aught  
but her,

Whose shadow thou art—lift thine eyes  
on me."

I lifted them: the overpowering light  
Of that immortal shape was shadowed o'er

By love; which, from his soft and flowing  
limbs,  
And passion-parted lips, and keen, faint  
eyes,  
Steamed forth like vaporous fire; an  
atmosphere  
Which wrapt me in its all-dissolving  
power,  
As the warm ether of the morning sun  
Wraps ere it drinks some cloud of wander-  
ing dew.  
I saw not, heard not, moved not, only felt  
His presence flow and mingle thro' my  
blood  
Till it became his life, and his grew mine,  
And I was thus absorbed, until it past,  
And like the vapors when the sun sinks  
down,  
Gathering again in drops upon the pines,  
And tremulous as they, in the deep night  
My being was condensed; and as the  
rays  
Of thought were slowly gathered, I could  
hear  
His voice, whose accents lingered ere they  
died  
Like footsteps of weak melody: thy  
name  
Among the many sounds alone I heard  
Of what might be articulate; tho' still  
I listened thro' the night when sound  
was none.  
I awoke then, and said to me:  
"Canst thou divine what troubles me  
to-night?  
I always knew what I desired before,  
Nor ever found delight to wish in vain.  
But now I cannot tell thee what I seek:  
I know not; something sweet, since it is  
sweet  
Even to desire; it is thy sport, false  
sister;  
Thou hast discovered some enchantment  
old,  
Whose spells have stolen my spirit as I  
slept  
And mingled it with thine: for when  
just now  
We kissed, I felt within thy parted lips  
The sweet air that sustained me, and the  
warmth  
Of the life-blood, for loss of which I faint,  
Quivered between our intertwining arms."  
I answered not, for the Eastern star grew  
pale,  
But fled to thee.

*Asia.* Thou speakest, but thy words  
Are as the air: I feel them not: Oh, lift  
Thine eyes, that I may read his written  
soul!

*Panthea.* I lift them tho' they droop  
beneath the load  
Of that they would express: what canst  
thou see  
But thine own fairest shadow imaged  
there?

*Asia.* Thine eyes are like the deep,  
blue, boundless heaven  
Contracted to two circles underneath  
Their long, fine lashes; dark, far, meas-  
ureless,  
Orb within orb, and line thro' line in-  
woven.

*Panthea.* Why lookest thou as if a  
spirit past?

*Asia.* There is a change: beyond their  
inmost depth  
I see a shade, a shape: 'tis He, arrayed  
In the soft light of his own smiles, which  
spread  
Like radiance from the cloud-surrounded  
moon.

Prometheus, it is thine! depart not yet!  
Say not those smiles that we shall meet  
again

Within that bright pavilion which their  
beams  
Shall build on the waste world? The  
dream is told.

What shape is that between us? Its  
rude hair  
Roughens the wind that lifts it, its regard  
Is wild and quick, yet 'tis a thing of air,  
For thro' its gray robe gleams the golden  
dew

Whose stars the noon has quenched not  
*Dream.* Follow! Follow!

*Panthea.* It is mine other dream.

*Asia.* It disappears.

*Panthea.* It passes now into my mind.  
Methought

As we sate here, the flower-infolding buds  
Burst on yon lightning-blasted almond-  
tree,

When swift from the white Scythian  
wilderness  
A wind swept forth wrinkling the Earth  
with frost:

I looked, and all the blossoms were blown  
down;  
But on each leaf was stamped, as the  
blue bells

Of Hyacinth tell Apollo's written grief,  
O, FOLLOW, FOLLOW!

*Asia.* As you speak, your words  
Fill, pause by pause, my own forgotten  
sleep

With shapes. Methought among the  
lawns together

We wandered, underneath the young  
gray dawn,

And multitudes of dense white fleecy  
clouds

Were wandering in thick flocks along the  
mountains

Shepherded by the slow, unwilling wind;  
And the white dew on the new bladed

grass,  
Just piercing the dark earth, hung  
silently:

And there was more which I remember  
not:

But on the shadows of the morning clouds,  
Athwart the purple mountain slope, was  
written

FOLLOW, O, FOLLOW! as they vanished  
by,

And on each herb, from which Heaven's  
dew had fallen,

The like was stamped, as with a withering  
fire,

A wind arose among the pines; it  
shook

The clinging music from their boughs, and  
then

Low, sweet, faint sounds, like the farewell  
of ghosts,

Were heard: O, FOLLOW, FOLLOW, FOLLOW  
ME!

And then I said: "Panthea, look on  
me."

But in the depth of those beloved eyes  
Still I saw, FOLLOW, FOLLOW!

*Echo.* Follow, follow!

*Panthea.* The crags, this clear spring  
morning, mock our voices

As they were spirit-tongued.

*Asia.* It is some being  
Around the crags. What fine clear  
sounds! O, list!

*Echoes (unseen)*

Echoes we: listen!

We cannot stay:

As dew-stars glisten

Then fade away—

Child of Ocean!

*Asia.* Hark! Spirits speak. The  
liquid responses

Of their aerial tongues yet sound.

*Panthea.*

I hear.

*Echoes*

O, follow, follow,

As our voice recedeth

Thro' the caverns hollow,

Where the forest spreadeth;

(*More distant*)

O, follow, follow!

Thro' the caverns hollow,

As the song floats thou pursue,

Where the wild bee never flew,

Thro' the noontide darkness deep,

By the odor-breathing sleep

Of faint night-flowers, and the waves

At the fountain-lighted caves,

While our music, wild and sweet,

Mocks thy gently falling feet,

Child of Ocean!

*Asia.* Shall we pursue the sound? It  
grows more faint

And distant.

*Panthea.* List! the strain floats  
nearer now.

*Echoes*

In the world unknown

Sleeps a voice unspoken;

By thy step alone

Can its rest be broken;

Child of Ocean!

*Asia.* How the notes sink upon the  
ebbing wind!

*Echoes*

O, follow, follow!

Thro' the caverns hollow,

As the song floats thou pursue,

By the woodland noontide dew;

By the forests, lakes, and fountains

Thro' the many-folded mountains;

To the rents, and gulfs, and chasms,

Where the Earth reposed from spasms,

On the day when He and thou

Parted, to commingle now;

Child of Ocean!

*Asia.* Come, sweet Panthea, link thy  
hand in mine,

And follow, ere the voices fade away.

SCENE II. — *A Forest, intermingled with  
Rocks and Caverns.**Semichorus I*

ASIA and PANTHEA pass into it. Two  
young Fauns are sitting on a Rock  
listening.

*Semichorus I of Spirits*

The path thro' which that lovely twain  
Have past, by cedar, pine, and yew,  
And each dark tree that ever grew,  
Is curtailed out from Heaven's wide  
blue;  
Nor sun, nor moon, nor wind, nor rain,  
Can pierce its interwoven bowers,  
Nor aught, save where some cloud of  
dew,  
Drifted along the earth-creeping breeze,  
Between the trunks of the hoar trees,  
Hangs each a pearl in the pale flowers  
Of the green laurel, blown anew;  
And bends, and then fades silently,  
One frail and fair anemone:  
Or when some star of many a one  
That climbs and wanders thro' steep  
night,  
Has found the cleft thro' which alone  
Beams fall from high those depths upon  
Ere it is borne away, away,  
By the swift Heavens that cannot stay,  
It scatters drops of golden light,  
Like lines of rain that ne'er unite:  
And the gloom divine is all around,  
And underneath is the mossy ground.

*Semichorus II*

There the voluptuous nightingales,  
Are awake thro' all the broad noonday.  
When one with bliss or sadness fails,  
And thro' the windless ivy-boughs,  
Sick with sweet love, droops dying  
away  
On its mate's music-panting bosom;  
Another from the swinging blossom,  
Watching to catch the languid close  
Of the last strain, then lifts on high  
The wings of the weak melody,  
Till some new strain of feeling bear  
The song, and all the woods are mute;  
When there is heard thro' the dim air  
The rush of wings, and rising there  
Like many a lake-surrounded flute,  
Sounds overflow the listener's brain  
So sweet, that joy is almost pain.

There those enchanted eddies play  
Of echoes, music-tongued, which draw,  
By Demogorgon's mighty law,  
With melting rapture, or sweet awe,  
All spirits on that secret way;  
As inland boats are driven to Ocean  
Down streams made strong with moun-  
tain-thaw:  
And first there comes a gentle sound  
To those in talk or slumber bound  
And wakes the destined. Soft emotion  
Attracts, impels them: those who saw  
Say from the breathing earth behind  
There steams a plume-uplifting wind  
Which drives them on their path, while  
they

Believe their own swift wings and feet  
The sweet desires within obey:  
And so they float upon their way,  
Until, still sweet, but loud and strong,  
The storm of sound is driven along,  
Sucked up and hurrying: as they fleet  
Behind, its gathering billows meet  
And to the fatal mountain bear  
Like clouds amid the yielding air.

*First Faun.* Canst thou imagine where  
those spirits live  
Which make such delicate music in the  
woods?  
We haunt within the least frequented  
caves  
And closest coverts, and we know these  
wilds,  
Yet never meet them, tho' we hear them  
oft:

Where may they hide themselves?

*Second Faun.* 'Tis hard to tell:  
I have heard those more skilled in spirits  
say,  
The bubbles, which the enchantment of  
the sun  
Sucks from the pale faint water-flowers  
that pave  
The oozy bottom of clear lakes and pools,  
Are the pavilions where such dwell and  
float  
Under the green and golden atmosphere  
Which noontide kindles thro' the woven  
leaves;  
And when these burst, and the thin fiery  
air,  
The which they breathed within those  
lucent domes,

Ascends to flow like meteors thro' the  
 night,  
 They ride on them, and rein their head-  
 long speed,  
 And bow their burning crests, and glide  
 in fire  
 Under the waters of the earth again.

*First Faun.* If such live thus, have  
 others other lives,  
 Under pink blossoms or within the bells  
 Of meadow flowers, or folded violets  
 deep,  
 Or on their dying odors, when they die,  
 Or in the sunlight of the spherèd dew?

*Second Faun.* Ay, many more which  
 we may well divine.  
 But, should we stay to speak, noontide  
 would come,  
 And thwart Silenus find his goats un-  
 drawn,  
 And grudge to sing those wise and lovely  
 songs  
 Of fate, and chance, and God, and Chaos  
 old,  
 And Love, and the chained Titan's wo-  
 ful doom,  
 And how he shall be loosed, and make the  
 earth  
 One brotherhood: delightful strains  
 which cheer  
 Our solitary twilights, and which charm  
 To silence the unenvying nightingales.

SCENE III. — *A Pinnacle of Rock among  
 Mountains.* ASIA and PANTHEA.

*Panthea.* Hither the sound has borne  
 us — to the realm  
 Of Demogorgon, and the mighty portal,  
 Like a volcano's meteor-breathing chasm,  
 Whence the oracular vapor is hurled up  
 Which lonely men drink wandering in  
 their youth,  
 And call truth, virtue, love, genius, or  
 joy,  
 That maddening wine of life, whose dregs  
 they drain  
 To deep intoxication; and uplift,  
 Like Mænads who cry loud, Evœe!  
 Evœe!  
 The voice which is contagion to the world.  
*Asia.* Fit throne for such a power!  
 Magnificent!  
 How glorious art thou, Earth! And if  
 thou be  
 The shadow of some spirit lovelier still,

Though evil stain its work, and it should  
 be  
 Like its creation, weak yet beautiful,  
 I could fall down and worship that and  
 thee.

Even now my heart adareth: Wonderful!  
 Look, sister, ere the vapor dim thy brain:  
 Beneath is a wide plain of billowy mist,  
 As a lake, paving in the morning sky,  
 With azure waves which burst in silver  
 light,

Some Indian vale. Behold it, rolling on  
 Under the curdling winds, and islanding  
 The peak whereon we stand, midway,  
 around,  
 Encinctured by the dark and blooming  
 forests,

Dim twilight-lawns, and stream-illu-  
 mined caves,  
 And wind-enchanted shapes of wander-  
 ing mist;  
 And far on high the keen sky-cleaving  
 mountains

From icy spires of sun-like radiance fling  
 The dawn, as lifted Ocean's dazzling  
 spray,

From some Atlantic islet scattered up,  
 Spangles the wind with lamp-like water-  
 drops.

The vale is girdled with their walls, a  
 howl  
 Of cataracts from their thaw-cloven  
 ravines,

Satiates the listening wind, continuous,  
 vast,  
 Awful as silence. Hark! the rushing  
 snow!

The sun-awakened avalanche! whose  
 mass,  
 Thrice sifted by the storm, had gathered  
 there

Flake after flake, in heaven-defying minds  
 As thought by thought is piled, till some  
 great truth

Is loosened, and the nations echo round,  
 Shaken to their roots, as do the mountains  
 now.

*Panthea.* Look how the gusty sea of  
 mist is breaking  
 In crimson foam, even at our feet! it rises  
 As Ocean at the enchantment of the  
 moon

Round foodless men wrecked on some  
 oozy isle.

*Asia.* The fragments of the cloud are  
 scattered up;



The wind that lifts them disentwines my  
hair;  
Its billows now sweep o'er mine eyes;  
my brain  
Grows dizzy; I see thin shapes within the  
mist.

*Panthea.* A countenance with beckon-  
ing smiles: there burns  
An azure fire within its golden locks!  
Another and another: hark! they speak!

*Song of Spirits*

To the deep, to the deep,  
Down, down!  
Through the shade of sleep,  
Through the cloudy strife  
Of Death and of Life;  
Through the veil and the bar  
Of things which seem and are  
Even to the steps of the remotest throne,  
Down, down!

While the sound whirls around,  
Down, down!  
As the fawn draws the hound,  
As the lightning the vapor,  
As the weak moth the taper;  
Death, despair; love, sorrow;  
Time both; to-day, to-morrow;  
As steel obeys the spirit of the stone,  
Down, down!

Through the gray, void abysm,  
Down, down!  
Where the air is no prism,  
And the moon and stars are not,  
And the cavern-crag wears not  
The radiance of Heaven,  
Nor the gloom to Earth given,  
Where there is one pervading, one alone,  
Down, down!

In the depth of the deep,  
Down, down!  
Like veiled lightning asleep,  
Like the spark nursed in embers,  
The last look Love remembers,  
Like a diamond, which shines  
On the dark wealth of mines,  
A spell is treasured but for thee alone,  
Down, down!

We have bound thee, we guide thee;  
Down, down!  
With the bright form beside thee;

Resist not the weakness,  
Such strength is in meekness  
That the Eternal, the Immortal,  
Must unloose through life's portal  
The snake-like Doom coiled underneath  
his throne  
By that alone.

SCENE IV. — *The Cave of DEMOGORGON.*  
*ASIA and PANTHEA.*

*Panthea.* What veiled form sits on that  
ebon throne?

*Asia.* The veil has fallen.

*Panthea.* I see a mighty darkness  
Filling the seat of power, and rays of  
gloom

Dart round, as light from the meridian  
sun,

Ungazed upon and shapeless; neither  
limb,

Nor form, nor outline; yet we feel it is  
A living Spirit.

*Demogorgon.* Ask what thou wouldst  
know.

*Asia.* What canst thou tell?

*Demogorgon.* All things thou  
dar'st demand.

*Asia.* Who made the living world?

*Demogorgon.* God.

*Asia.* Who made all  
That it contains? thought, passion,  
reason, will,

Imagination?

*Demogorgon.* God: Almighty God.

*Asia.* Who made that sense which,  
when the winds of spring

In rarest visitation, or the voice  
Of one beloved heard in youth alone,  
Fills the faint eyes with falling tears  
which dim

The radiant looks of unbewailing flowers,  
And leaves this peopled earth a solitude  
When it returns no more?

*Demogorgon.* Merciful God.

*Asia.* And who made terror, madness,  
crime, remorse,

Which from the links of the great chain of  
things,

To every thought within the mind of  
man

Sway and drag heavily, and each one  
reels

Under the load towards the pit of death;  
Abandoned hope, and love that turns to  
hate;

And self-contempt, bitterer to drink than  
 blood;  
 Pain, whose unheeded and familiar  
 speech  
 Is howling, and keen shrieks, day after  
 day;  
 And Hell, or the sharp fear of Hell?  
*Demogorgon.* He reigns.  
*Asia.* Utter his name: a world pining  
 in pain  
 Asks but his name: curses shall drag him  
 down.  
*Demogorgon.* He reigns.  
*Asia.* I feel, I know it: who?  
*Demogorgon.* He reigns.  
*Asia.* Who reigns? There was the  
 Heaven and Earth at first,  
 And Light and Love; then Saturn, from  
 whose throne  
 Time fell, an envious shadow: such the  
 state  
 Of the earth's primal spirits beneath his  
 sway,  
 As the calm joy of flowers and living  
 leaves  
 Before the wind or sun has withered  
 them  
 And semivital worms; but he refused  
 The birthright of their being, knowledge,  
 power,  
 The skill which wields the elements, the  
 thought  
 Which pierces this dim universe like light,  
 Self-empire, and the majesty of love;  
 For thirst of which they fainted. Then  
 Prometheus  
 Gave wisdom, which is strength, to  
 Jupiter,  
 And with this law alone, "Let man be  
 free,"  
 Clothed him with the dominion of wide  
 Heaven,  
 To know nor faith, nor love, nor law; to  
 be  
 Omnipotent but friendless, is to reign;  
 And Jove now reigned; for on the race of  
 man  
 First famine, and then toil, and then  
 disease,  
 Strife, wounds, and ghastly death unseen  
 before,  
 Fell; and the unseasonable seasons  
 drove  
 With alternating shafts of frost and fire,  
 Their shelterless, pale tribes to mountain  
 caves:

And in their desert hearts fierce wants he  
 sent,  
 And mad disquietudes, and shadows idle  
 Of unreal good, which levied mutual war,  
 So ruining the lair wherein they raged.  
 Prometheus saw, and waked the legions  
 hopes  
 Which sleep within folded Elysian flowers,  
 Nepenthe, Moly, Amaranth, fadeless  
 blooms,  
 That they might hide with thin and rain-  
 bow wings  
 The shape of Death; and Love he sent  
 to bind  
 The disunited tendrils of that vine  
 Which bears the wine of life, the human  
 heart:  
 And he tamed fire which, like some beast  
 of prey,  
 Most terrible, but lovely, played beneath  
 The frown of man; and tortured to his  
 will  
 Iron and gold, the slaves and signs of  
 power,  
 And gems and poisons, and all subtlest  
 forms  
 Hidden beneath the mountains and the  
 waves.  
 He gave man speech, and speech created  
 thought,  
 Which is the measure of the universe;  
 And Science struck the thrones of earth  
 and heaven,  
 Which shook, but fell not; and the har-  
 monious mind  
 Poured itself forth in all-prophetic song;  
 And music lifted up the listening spirit  
 Until it walked, exempt from mortal care,  
 Godlike, o'er the clear billows of sweet  
 sound;  
 And human hands first mimicked and  
 then mocked,  
 With moulded limbs more lovely than its  
 own,  
 The human form, till marble grew divine;  
 And mothers, gazing, drank the love men  
 see  
 Reflected in their race, behold, and perish.  
 He told the hidden power of herbs and  
 springs,  
 And Disease drank and slept. Death  
 grew like sleep.  
 He taught the implicated orbits woven  
 Of the wide-wandering stars; and how  
 the sun  
 Changes his lair, and by what secret spell

The pale moon is transformed, when her  
broad eye  
Gazes not on the interlunar sea:  
He taught to rule, as life directs the  
limbs,  
The tempest-wingèd chariots of the  
Ocean,  
And the Celt knew the Indian. Cities  
then  
Were built, and through their snow-like  
columns flowed  
The warm winds, and the azure æther  
shone,  
And the blue sea and shadowy hills were  
seen.  
Such, the alleviations of his state,  
Prometheus gave to man, for which he  
hangs  
Withering in destined pain: but who  
rains down  
Evil, the immedicable plague, which,  
while  
Man looks on his creation like a God  
And sees that it is glorious, drives him on  
The wreck of his own will, the scorn of  
earth,  
The outcast, the abandoned, the alone?  
Not Jove: while yet his frown shook  
heaven, ay when  
His adversary from adamant chains  
Cursed him, he trembled like a slave.  
Declare  
Who is his master? Is he too a slave?  
*Demogorgon.* All spirits are enslaved  
which serve things evil:  
Thou knowest if Jupiter be such or no.  
*Asia.* Whom called'st thou God?  
*Demogorgon.* I spoke but as ye  
speak,  
For Jove is the supreme of living things.  
*Asia.* Who is the master of the slave?  
*Demogorgon.* If the abysm  
Could vomit forth its secrets. . . . But a  
voice  
Is wanting, the deep truth is imageless;  
For what would it avail to bid thee gaze  
On the revolving world? What to bid  
speak  
Fate, Time, Occasion, Chance, and  
Change? To these  
All things are subject but eternal Love.  
*Asia.* So much I asked before, and  
my heart gave  
The response thou has given; and of  
such truths  
Each to itself must be the oracle.

One more demand; and do thou answer  
me  
As mine own soul would answer, did it  
know  
That which I ask. Prometheus shall  
arise  
Henceforth the sun of this rejoicing  
world:  
When shall the destined hour arrive?  
*Demogorgon.* Behold!  
*Asia.* The rocks are cloven, and  
through the purple night  
I see cars drawn by rainbow-wingèd  
steeds  
Which trample the dim winds: in each  
there stands  
A wild-eyed charioteer urging their flight.  
Some look behind, as fiends pursued  
them there.  
And yet I see no shapes but the keen  
stars:  
Others, with burning eyes, lean forth,  
and drink  
With eager lips the wind of their own  
speed,  
As if the thing they loved fled on before,  
And now, even now, they clasped it.  
Their bright locks  
Stream like a comet's flashing hair: they  
all  
Sweep onward.  
*Demogorgon.* These are the immortal  
Hours,  
Of whom thou didst demand. One waits  
for thee.  
*Asia.* A spirit with a dreadful coun-  
tenance  
Checks its dark chariot by the craggy  
gulf.  
Unlike thy brethren, ghastly charioteer,  
Who art thou? Whither wouldst thou  
bear me? Speak!  
*Spirit.* I am the shadow of a destiny  
More dread than is my aspect: ere yon  
planet  
Has set, the darkness which ascends  
with me  
Shall wrap in lasting night heaven's king-  
less throne.  
*Asia.* What meanest thou?  
*Panthea.* That terrible shadow  
floats  
Up from its throne, as may the lurid  
smoke  
Of earthquake-ruined cities o'er the sea.  
Lo! it ascends the car; the coursers fly

Terrified: watch its path among the  
stars

Blackening the night!

*Asia.* Thus I am answered;  
strange!

*Panthea.* See, near the verge, another  
chariot stays;

An ivory shell inlaid with crimson fire,  
Which comes and goes within its sculptured rim

Of delicate strange tracery; the young  
spirit

That guides it has the dove-like eyes of  
hope;

How its soft smiles attract the soul! as  
light

Lures winged insects through the lamp-  
less air.

*Spirit*

My coursers are fed with the lightning,

They drink of the whirlwind's stream,

And when the red morning is brightning

They bathe in the fresh sunbeam;

They have strength for their swiftness

I deem,

Then ascend with me, daughter of Ocean.

I desire; and their speed makes night  
kindle;

I fear: they outstrip the Typhoon;

Ere the cloud piled on Atlas can dwindle

We encircle the earth and the moon:

We shall rest from long labors at noon:

Then ascend with me, daughter of Ocean.

SCENE V. — *The Car pauses within a  
Cloud on the Top of a Snowy Moun-  
tain.* ASIA, PANTHEA, and the  
SPIRIT of the Hour.

*Spirit*

On the brink of the night and the morn-  
ing

My coursers are wont to respire;

But the Earth has just whispered a warn-  
ing

That their flight must be swifter than  
fire:

They shall drink the hot speed of  
desire!

*Asia.* Thou breathest on their nostrils,  
but my breath

Would give them swifter speed.

*Spirit.* Alas! it could not.

*Panthea.* Oh Spirit! pause, and tell  
whence is the light

Which fills the cloud? the sun is yet  
unrisen.

*Spirit.* The sun will rise not until  
noon. Apollo

Is held in heaven by wonder; and the  
light

Which fills this vapor, as the ærial hue  
Of fountain-gazing roses fills the water,  
Flows from thy mighty sister.

*Panthea.* Yes, I feel —

*Asia.* What is it with thee, sister?  
Thou art pale.

*Panthea.* How thou art changed! I  
dare not look on thee;

I feel but see thee not. I scarce endure  
The radiance of thy beauty. Some good  
change

Is working in the elements, which suffer  
Thy presence thus unveiled. The Ne-  
reids tell

That on the day when the clear hyaline  
Was cloven at thy uprise, and thou didst  
stand

Within a veined shell, which floated on  
Over the calm floor of the crystal sea,

Among the Ægean isles, and by the shores  
Which bear thy name; love, like the  
atmosphere

Of the sun's fire filling the living world,  
Burst from thee, and illumined earth and  
heaven

And the deep ocean and the sunless caves  
And all that dwells within them; till grief  
cast

Eclipse upon the soul from which it came:  
Such art thou now; nor is it I alone,

Thy sister, thy companion, thine own  
chosen one,

But the whole world which seeks thy  
sympathy.

Hearst thou not sounds i' the air which  
speak the love

Of all articulate beings? Feelest thou  
not

The inanimate winds enamored of thee?  
List! (*Music.*)

*Asia.* Thy words are sweeter than  
aught else but his

Whose echoes they are: yet all love is  
sweet,

Given or returned. Common as light is  
love,

And its familiar voice wearies not ever.

Like the wide heaven, the all-sustaining  
air,

It makes the reptile equal to the God:  
They who inspire it most are fortunate,  
As I am now; but those who feel it most  
Are happier still, after long sufferings,  
As I shall soon become.

*Panthea.* List! Spirits speak.

*Voice in the Air Singing*

Life of Life! thy lips enkindle  
With their love the breath between  
them;

And thy smiles before they dwindle  
Make the cold air fire; then screen  
them

In those looks, where whoso gazes  
Faints, entangled in their mazes.

Child of Light! thy limbs are burning  
Thro' the vest which seems to hide  
them;

As the radiant lines of morning  
Thro' the clouds ere they divide them;  
And this atmosphere divinest  
Shrouds thee wheresoe'er thou shinest.

Fair are others; none beholds thee,  
But thy voice sounds low and tender  
Like the fairest, for it folds thee  
From the sight, that liquid splendor,  
And all feel, yet see thee never,  
As I feel now, lost for ever!

Lamp of Earth! where'er thou movest  
Its dim shapes are clad with brightness,  
And the souls of whom thou lovest

Walk upon the winds with lightness,  
Till they fail, as I am failing,  
Dizzy, lost, yet unbewailing!

*Asia*

My soul is an enchanted boat,  
Which, like a sleeping swan, doth float  
Upon the silver waves of thy sweet sing-  
ing;

And thine doth like an angel sit  
Beside a helm conducting it,  
Whilst all the winds with melody are  
ringing.

It seems to float ever, for ever,  
Upon that many-winding river,  
Between mountains, woods, abysses,  
A paradise of wildernesses!  
Till, like one in slumber bound,

Borne to the ocean, I float down, around,  
Into a sea profound, of ever-spreading  
sound:

Meanwhile thy spirit lifts its pinions  
In music's most serene dominions;  
Catching the winds that fan that happy  
heaven.

And we sail on, away, afar,  
Without a course, without a star,  
But, by the instinct of sweet music  
driven;

Till through Elysian garden islets  
By thee, most beautiful of pilots,  
Where never mortal pinnace glided,  
The boat of my desire is guided:  
Realms where the air we breathe is love,  
Which in the winds and on the waves doth  
move,

Harmonizing this earth with what we feel  
above.

We have pass'd Age's icy caves,  
And Manhood's dark and tossing  
waves,  
And Youth's smooth ocean, smiling to  
betray:

Beyond the glassy gulfs we flee  
Of shadow-peopled Infancy,  
Through Death and Birth, to a diviner  
day;

A paradise of vaulted bowers,  
Lit by downward-gazing flowers,  
And watery paths that wind between  
Wildernesses calm and green,  
Peopled by shapes too bright to see,  
And rest, having beheld; somewhat like  
thee:

Which walk upon the sea, and chant  
melodiously!

ACT III

SCENE I. — *Heaven.* JUPITER *on his Throne;* THETIS *and the other Deities assembled.*

*Jupiter.* Ye congregated powers of  
heaven, who share  
The glory and the strength of him ye  
serve,

Rejoice! henceforth I am omnipotent.  
All else had been subdued to me; alone  
The soul of man, like unextinguished fire,  
Yet burns towards heaven with fierce  
reproach, and doubt,



And lamentation, and reluctant prayer,  
Hurling up insurrection, which might  
make

Our antique empire insecure, though built  
On eldest faith, and hell's coeval, fear;  
And tho' my curses thro' the pendulous  
air,

Like snow on herbless peaks, fall flake by  
flake,  
And cling to it; tho' under my wrath's  
night

It climbs the crags of life, step after step,  
Which wound it, as ice wounds unsan-  
dalled feet,

It yet remains supreme o'er misery,  
Aspiring, unrepressed, yet soon to fall:  
Even now have I begotten a strange  
wonder,

That fatal child, the terror of the earth,  
Who waits but till the destined hour  
arrive,

Bearing from Demogorgon's vacant  
throne

The dreadful might of ever-living limbs  
Which clothed that awful spirit un-  
beheld,

To redescend, and trample out the spark.  
Pour forth heaven's wine, Idaean Gany-  
mede,

And let it fill the Dædal cups like fire,  
And from the flower-inwoven soil divine  
Ye all-triumphant harmonies arise,  
As dew from earth under the twilight  
stars:

Drink! be the nectar circling thro' your  
veins

The soul of joy, ye ever-living Gods,  
Till exultation burst in one wide voice  
Like music from Elysian winds.

And thou  
Ascend beside me, veiled in the light  
Of the desire which makes thee one with  
me,

Thetis, bright image of eternity!  
When thou didst cry, "Insufferable night!  
God! Spare me! I sustain not the  
quick flames,

The penetrating presence; all my being,  
Like him whom the Numidian seps did  
thaw

Into a dew with poison, is dissolved,  
Sinking thro' its foundations:" even then  
Two mighty spirits, mingling, made a  
third

Mightier than either, which, unbodied  
now

Between us floats, felt, although unbe-  
held,

Waiting the incarnation, which ascends,  
(Hear ye the thunder of the fiery wheels  
Gridding the winds?) from Demogorgon's  
throne.

Victory! victory! Feel'st thou not, O  
world,

The earthquake of his chariot thundering  
up

Olympus?

[*The Car of the HOUR arrives. DEMO-  
GORGON descends, and moves  
towards the Throne of JUPITER.*

Awful shape, what art thou?  
Speak!

*Demogorgon.* Eternity. Demand not  
direr name.

Descend, and follow me down the abyss.  
I am thy child, as thou wert Saturn's  
child;

Mightier than thee: and we must dwell  
together

Henceforth in darkness. Lift thy light-  
nings not.

The tyranny of heaven none may retain,  
Or reassume, or hold, succeeding thee:  
Yet if thou wilt, as 'tis the destiny  
Of trodden worms to writhe till they are  
dead,

Put forth thy might.

*Jupiter.* Detested prodigy!

Even thus beneath the deep Titanian  
prisons

I trample thee! thou lingerest?

Mercy! mercy!

No pity, no release, no respite! Oh,  
That thou wouldest make mine enemy my  
judge,

Even where he hangs, seared by my long  
revenge,

On Caucasus! he would not doom me  
thus.

Gentle, and just, and dreadless, is he not  
The monarch of the world? What then  
art thou?

No refuge! no appeal!

Sink with me then,

We too will sink on the wide waves of  
ruin,

Even as a vulture and a snake outspent  
Drop, twisted in inextricable fight,

Into a shoreless sea. Let hell unlock

Its mounded oceans of tempestuous fire,  
And whelm on them into the bottomless  
void

This desolated world, and thee, and me,  
The conqueror and the conquered, and  
the wreck  
Of that for which they combated.

Ai! Ai!

The elements obey me not. I sink  
Dizzily down, ever, for ever, down.  
And, like a cloud, mine enemy above  
Darkens my fall with victory! Ai, Ai!

SCENE II. — *The Mouth of a great River  
in the Island Atlantis. Ocean is  
discovered reclining near the Shore;  
APOLLO stands beside him.*

*Ocean.* He fell, thou sayest, beneath  
his conqueror's frown?

*Apollo.* Aye, when the strife was  
ended which made dim

The orb I rule, and shook the solid stars,  
The terrors of his eye illumined heaven  
With sanguine light, through the thick  
ragged skirts

Of the victorious darkness, as he fell:  
Like the last glare of day's red agony,  
Which, from a rent among the fiery  
clouds,

Burns far along the tempest-wrinkled  
deep.

*Ocean.* He sunk to the abyss? To the  
dark void?

*Apollo.* An eagle so caught in some  
bursting cloud

On Caucasus, his thunder-baffled wings  
Entangled in the whirlwind, and his eyes  
Which gazed on the undazzling sun, now  
blinded

By the white lightning, while the ponder-  
ous hail

Beats on his struggling form, which sinks  
at length

Prone, and the ærial ice clings over it.

*Ocean.* Henceforth the fields of  
Heaven-reflecting sea

Which are my realm, will heave, un-  
stained with blood,  
Beneath the uplifting winds, like plains  
of corn

Swayed by the summer air; my streams  
will flow

Round many-peopled continents, and  
round

Fortunate isles; and from their glassy  
thrones

Blue Proteus and his humid nymphs  
shall mark

The shadow of fair ships, as mortals see  
The floating bark of the light-laden moon  
With that white star, its sightless pilot's  
crest,

Borne down the rapid sunset's ebbing sea;  
Tracking their path no more by blood and  
groans,

And desolation, and the mingled voice  
Of slavery and command! but by the  
light

Of wave-reflected flowers, and floating  
odors,

And music soft, and mild, free, gentle  
voices,

And sweetest music, such as spirits love.

*Apollo.* And I shall gaze not on the  
deeds which make

My mind obscure with sorrow, as eclipse  
Darkens the sphere I guide; but list, I  
hear

The small, clear, silver lute of the young  
Spirit

That sits i' the morning star.

*Ocean.* Thou must away;

Thy steeds will pause at even, till when  
farewell:

The loud deep calls me home even now  
to feed it

With azure calm out of the emerald urns  
Which stand for ever full beside my  
throne.

Behold the Nereids under the green sea,  
Their wavering limbs borne on the wind-  
like stream,

Their white arms lifted o'er their stream-  
ing hair

With garlands pied and starry sea-flower  
crowns,

Hastening to grace their mighty sister's  
joy. [*A sound of waves is heard.*]

It is the unpastured sea hungering for  
calm.

Peace, monster; I come now. Farewell.

*Apollo.* Farewell.

SCENE III. — CAUCASUS. PROMETHEUS,  
HERCULES, IONE, the EARTH, SPIR-  
ITS, ASIA, and PANTHEA, borne in  
the Car with the SPIRIT OF THE  
HOUR. HERCULES unbinds PROME-  
THEUS, who descends.

*Hercules.* Most glorious among spirits,  
thus doth strength  
To wisdom, courage, and long-suffering  
love,

And thee, who art the form they animate,  
Minister like a slave.

*Prometheus.* Thy gentle words  
Are sweeter even than freedom long  
desired

And long delayed.

Asia, thou light of life,  
Shadow of beauty unbeheld: and ye,  
Fair sister nymphs, who made long years  
of pain

Sweet to remember, thro' your love and  
care:

Henceforth we will not part. There is a  
cave,

All overgrown with trailing odorous  
plants,

Which curtain out the day with leaves  
and flowers,

And paved with veinèd emerald, and a  
fountain

Leaps in the midst with an awakening  
sound.

From its curved roof the mountain's  
frozen tears

Like snow, or silver, or long diamond  
spires,

Hand downward, raining forth a doubtful  
light:

And there is heard the ever-moving air,  
Whispering without from tree to tree,  
and birds,

And bees; and all around are mossy  
seats,

And the rough walls are clothed with  
long soft grass;

A simple dwelling, which shall be our  
own;

Where we will sit and talk of time and  
change,

As the world ebbs and flows, ourselves  
unchanged.

What can hide man from mutability?

And if ye sigh, then I will smile; and  
thou,

Ione, shalt chant fragments of sea-music,  
Until I weep, when ye shall smile away  
The tears she brought, which yet were  
sweet to shed.

We will entangle buds and flowers and  
beams

Which twinkle on the fountain's brim,  
and make

Strange combinations out of common  
things,

Like human babes in their brief inno-  
cence;

And we will search, with looks and words  
of love,

For hidden thoughts, each lovelier than  
the last,

Our unexhausted spirits; and like lutes  
Touched by the skill of the enamored  
wind,

Weave harmonies divine, yet ever new,  
From difference sweet where discord  
cannot be;

And hither come, sped on the charmed  
winds,

Which meet from all the points of heaven,  
as bees

From every flower ærial Enna feeds,  
At their known island-homes in Himera,

The echoes of the human world, which  
tell

Of the low voice of love, almost unheard,  
And dove-eyed pity's murmured pain,  
and music,

Itself the echo of the heart, and all  
That tempers or improves man's life, now  
free;

And lovely apparitions, dim at first,  
Then radiant, as the mind, arising bright

From the embrace of beauty, whence the  
forms

Of which these are the phantoms, cast  
on them

The gathered rays which are reality,  
Shall visit us, the progeny immortal

Of Painting, Sculpture, and rapt Poesy,  
And arts, tho' unimagined, yet to be.

The wandering voices and the shadows  
these

Of all that man becomes, the mediators  
Of that best worship love, by him and us

Given and returned; swift shapes and  
sounds, which grow

More fair and soft as man grows wise  
and kind,

And, veil by veil, evil and error fall:  
Such virtue has the cave and place

around.  
[Turning to the Spirit of the Hour.

For thee, fair Spirit, one toil remains.  
Ione,

Give her that curvèd shell, which Proteus  
old

Made Asia's nuptial boon, breathing  
within it

A voice to be accomplished, and which  
thou

Didst hide in grass under the hollow  
rock.

*Ione.* Thou most desired Hour, more  
loved and lovely  
Than all thy sisters, this is the mystic  
shell;  
See the pale azure fading into silver  
Lining it with a soft yet glowing light:  
Looks it not like lulled music sleeping  
there?

*Spirit.* It seems in truth the fairest  
shell of Ocean:  
Its sounds must be at once both sweet  
and strange.

*Prometheus.* Go, borne over the cities  
of mankind  
On whirlwind-footed coursers: once  
again

Outspeed the sun around the orbèd world;  
And as thy chariot cleaves the kindling air,  
Thou breathe into the many-folded shell,  
Loosening its mighty music; it shall be  
As thunder mingled with clear echoes:  
then  
Return; and thou shalt dwell beside our  
cave.

And thou, O, Mother Earth!—

*The Earth.* I hear, I feel;  
Thy lips are on me, and thy touch runs  
down

Even to the adamantine central gloom  
Along these marble nerves; 'tis life, 'tis  
joy,

And through my withered, old, and icy  
frame

The warmth of an immortal youth shoots  
down

Circling. Henceforth the many children  
fair

Folded in my sustaining arms; all  
plants,

And creeping forms, and insects rainbow-  
winged,

And birds, and beasts, and fish, and  
human shapes,

Which drew disease and pain from my  
wan bosom,

Draining the poison of despair, shall  
take

And interchange sweet nutriment; to  
me

Shall they become like sister antelopes  
By one fair dam, snow-white and swift

as wind,  
Nursed among lilies near a brimming  
stream.

The dew-mists of my sunless sleep shall  
float

Under the stars like balm: night-folded  
flowers

Shall suck, unwithering hues in their  
repose:

And men and beasts in happy dreams  
shall gather

Strength for the coming day, and all its  
joy:

And death shall be the last embrace of her  
Who takes the life she gave, even as a

mother  
Folding her child, says, "Leave me not  
again."

*Asia.* Oh, mother! wherefore speak  
the name of death?

Cease they to love, and move, and  
breathe, and speak,

Who die?

*The Earth.* It would avail not to  
reply:

Thou art immortal, and this tongue is  
known

But to the uncommunicating dead.  
Death is the veil which those who live

call life:  
They sleep, and it is lifted: and mean-  
while

In mild variety the seasons mild  
With rainbow-skirted showers, and odor-  
ous winds,

And long blue meteors cleansing the dull  
night,

And the life-kindling shafts of the keen  
sun's

All-piercing bow, and the dew-mingled  
rain

Of the calm moonbeams, a soft influence  
mild,

Shall clothe the forests and the fields, ay,  
even

The crag-built deserts of the barren deep,  
With ever-living leaves, and fruits, and

flowers.

And thou! There is a cavern where my  
spirit

Was panted forth in anguish whilst thy  
pain

Made my heart mad, and those who did  
inhale it

Became mad too, and built a temple there,  
And spoke, and were oracular, and lured

The erring nations round to mutual war,  
And faithless faith, such as Jove kept

with thee;

Which breath now rises, as amongst tall  
weeds

A violet's exhalation, and it fills  
 With a serener light and crimson air  
 Intense, yet soft, the rocks and woods  
 around;  
 It feeds the quick growth of the serpent  
 vine,  
 And the dark linkèd ivy tangling wild,  
 And budding, blown, or odor-faded  
 blooms  
 Which star the winds with points of  
 colored light,  
 As they rain thro' them, and bright  
 golden globes  
 Of fruit, suspended in their own green  
 heaven,  
 And thro' their veinèd leaves and amber  
 stems  
 The flowers whose purple and translucid  
 bowls  
 Stand ever mantling with aërial dew,  
 The drink of spirits: and its circles round,  
 Like the soft waving wings of noonday  
 dreams,  
 Inspiring calm and happy thoughts, like  
 mine,  
 Now thou art thus restored. This cave  
 is thine.  
 Arise! Appear!

[*A Spirit rises in the likeness  
 of a winged child.*

This is my torch-bearer:  
 Who let his lamp out in old time with  
 gazing  
 On eyes from which he kindled it anew  
 With love, which is as fire, sweet daughter  
 mine,  
 For such is that within thine own. Run,  
 wayward,  
 And guide this company beyond the peak  
 Of Bacchic Nysa, Mænad-haunted moun-  
 tain,  
 And beyond Indus and its tribute rivers,  
 Trampling the torrent streams and glassy  
 lakes  
 With feet unwet, unwearied, undelaying,  
 And up the green ravine, across the vale,  
 Beside the windless and crystalline pool,  
 Where ever lies, on unerasing waves,  
 The image of a temple, built above,  
 Distinct with column, arch, and archi-  
 trate,  
 And palm-like capital, and over-wrought  
 And populous most with living imagery,  
 Praxitelean shapes, whose marble smiles  
 Fill the hushed air with everlasting love.  
 It is deserted now, but once it bore

Thy name, Prometheus; there the emu-  
 lous youths  
 Bore to thy honor thro' the divine gloom  
 The lamp which was thine emblem; even  
 as those  
 Who bear the untransmitted torch of hope  
 Into the grave, across the night of life,  
 As thou hast borne it most triumphantly  
 To this far goal of Time. Depart, fare-  
 well.  
 Beside that temple is the destined cave.

SCENE IV.—*A Forest. In the Back-  
 ground a Cave.* PROMETHEUS, ASIA,  
 PANTHEA, IONE, and the SPIRIT OF  
 THE EARTH.

*Ione.* Sister, it is not earthly: how it  
 glides  
 Under the leaves! how on its head there  
 burns  
 A light, like a green star, whose emerald  
 beams  
 Are twined with its fair hair! how, as  
 it moves,  
 The splendor drops in flakes upon the  
 grass!  
 Knowest thou it?  
*Panthea.* It is the delicate spirit  
 That guides the earth thro' heaven  
 From afar  
 The populous constellations call that  
 light  
 The loveliest of the planets; and some-  
 times  
 It floats along the spray of the salt sea,  
 Or makes its chariot of a foggy cloud,  
 Or walks thro' fields or cities while men  
 sleep,  
 Or o'er the mountain tops, or down the  
 rivers,  
 Or thro' the green waste wilderness, as  
 now,  
 Wondering at all it sees. Before Jove  
 reigned  
 It loved our sister Asia, and it came  
 Each leisure hour to drink the liquid  
 light  
 Out of her eyes, for which it said it  
 thirsted  
 As one bit by a dipsas, and with her  
 It made its childish confidence, and told  
 her  
 All it had known or seen, for it saw much,  
 Yet idly reasoned what it saw; and called  
 her—



For whence it sprung it knew not, nor  
do I—

Mother, dear mother.

*The Spirit of the Earth (running to Asia).*

Mother, dearest mother;

May I then talk with thee as I was wont?

May I then hide my eyes in thy soft arms,  
After thy looks have made them tired of  
joy?

May I then play beside thee the long  
noons,

When work is none in the bright silent  
air?

*Asia.* I love thee, gentlest being, and  
henceforth

Can cherish thee unenvied: speak, I  
pray:

Thy simple talk once solaced, now de-  
lights.

*Spirit of the Earth.* Mother, I am  
grown wiser, though a child

Cannot be wise like thee, within this day;  
And happier too; happier and wiser both.

Thou knowest that toads, and snakes, and  
loathly worms,

And venomous and malicious beasts, and  
boughs

That bore ill berries in the woods, were  
ever

An hindrance to my walks o'er the green  
world:

And that, among the haunts of human-  
kind,

Hard-featured men, or with proud, angry  
looks,

Or cold, staid gait, or false and hollow  
smiles,

Or the dull sneer of self-loved ignorance,  
Or other such foul masks, with which ill

thoughts  
Hide that fair being whom we spirits call  
man;

And women too, ugliest of all things evil,  
(Tho' fair, even in a world where thou art  
fair,

When good and kind, free and sincere  
like thee),

When false or frowning made me sick at  
heart

To pass them, tho' they slept, and I un-  
seen.

Well, my path lately lay thro' a great city  
Into the woody hills surrounding it:

A sentinel was sleeping at the gate:  
When there was heard a sound, so loud

it shook

The towes amid the moonlight, yet more  
sweet

Than any voice but thine, sweetest of all;  
A long, long sound, as it would never end:

And all the inhabitants leapt suddenly  
Out of their rest, and gathered in the

streets,  
Looking in wonder up to Heaven, while  
yet

The music pealed along. I hid myself  
Within a fountain in the public square,

Where I lay like the reflex of the moon  
Seen in a wave under green leaves; and

soon  
Those ugly human shapes and visages  
Of which I spoke as having wrought me

pain,  
Passed floating thro' the air, and fading  
still

Into the winds that scattered them; and  
those

From whom they passed seemed mild and  
lovely forms

After some foul disguise had fallen, and all  
Were somewhat changed, and after brief

surprise  
And greetings of delighted wonder, all  
Went to their sleep again: and when the

dawn  
Came, would'st thou think that toads,  
and snakes, and efts,

Could e'er be beautiful? yet so they were,  
And that with little change of shape or

hue:  
All things had put their evil nature off;  
I cannot tell my joy, when o'er a lake

Upon a drooping bough with nightshade  
twined,

I saw two azure halcyons clinging down-  
ward

And thinning one bright bunch of amber  
berries,

With quick long beaks, and in the deep  
there lay

Those lovely forms imaged as in a sky;  
So, with my thoughts full of these happy

changes,  
We meet again, the happiest change of all.

*Asia.* And never will we part, till thy  
chaste sister

Who guides the frozen and inconstant  
moon

Will look on thy more warm and equal  
light

Till her heart thaw like flakes of April snow  
And love thee,

*Spirit of the Earth.* What; as Asia  
loves Prometheus?

*Asia.* Peace, wanton, thou art yet  
not old enough.

Think ye by gazing on each other's eyes  
To multiply your lovely selves, and fill  
With spherèd fires the interlunar air?

*Spirit of the Earth.* Nay, mother, while  
my sister trims her lamp

'Tis hard I should go darkling.

*Asia.* Listen; look!

*The SPIRIT OF THE HOUR enters.*

*Prometheus.* We feel what thou hast  
heard and seen; yet speak.

*Spirit of the Hour.* Soon as the sound  
had ceased whose thunder filled  
The abysses of the sky and the wide earth,  
There was a change: the impalpable thin  
air

And the all-circling sunlight were trans-  
formed,

As if the sense of love dissolved in them  
Had folded itself round the spherèd world.  
My vision then grew clear, and I could see  
Into the mysteries of the universe:

Dizzy as with delight I floated down;  
Winnowing the lightsome air with languid  
plumes,

My coursers sought their birthplace in the  
sun,

Where they henceforth will live exempt  
from toil

Pasturing flowers of vegetable fire;  
And where my moonlike car will stand  
within

A temple, gazed upon by Phidian forms  
Of thee, and Asia, and the Earth, and me,  
And you fair nymphs looking the love we  
feel,—

In memory of the tidings it has borne, —  
Beneath a dome fretted with graven  
flowers,

Poised on twelve columns of resplendent  
stone,

And open to the bright and liquid sky.  
Yoked to it by an amphisbenic snake  
The likeness of those winged steeds will  
mock

The flight from which they find repose.  
Alas,

Whither has wandered now my partial  
tongue

When all remains untold which ye would  
hear?

As I have said I floated to the earth:  
It was, as it is still, the pain of bliss  
To move, to breathe, to be; I wandering  
went

Among the haunts and dwellings of man-  
kind,

And first was disappointed not to see  
Such mighty change as I had felt within  
Expressed in outward things; but soon

I looked,  
And behold, thrones were kingless, and  
men walked

One with the other even as spirits do,  
None fawned, none trampled; hate, dis-  
dain, or fear,

Self-love or self-contempt, on human  
brows,

No more inscribed, as o'er the gate of hell,  
"All hope abandon ye who enter here;"

None frowned, none trembled, none with  
eager fear

Gazed on another's eye of cold command,  
Until the subject of the tyrant's will

Became, worse fate, the abject of his own,  
Which spurred him, like an outspent  
horse, to death.

None wrought his lips in truth-entangling  
lines

Which smiled the lie his tongue disdained  
to speak;

None, with firm sneer, trod out in his own  
heart

The sparks of love and hope till there  
remained

Those bitter ashes, a soul self-consumed,  
And the wretch crept a vampire among  
men,

Infecting all with his own hideous ill;  
None talked that common, false, cold,  
hollow talk

Which makes the heart deny the *yes* it  
breathes,

Yet question that unmeant hypocrisy  
With such a self-mistrust as has no name.

And women, too, frank, beautiful, and  
kind

As the free heaven which rains fresh light  
and dew

On the wide earth, passed; gentle radiant  
forms,

From custom's evil taint exempt and  
pure;

Speaking the wisdom once they could not  
think,

Looking emotions once they feared to  
feel,

And changed to all which once they dared  
 not be,  
 Yet being now, made earth like heaven;  
 nor pride,  
 Nor jealousy, nor envy, nor ill shame,  
 The bitterest of those drops of treasured  
 gall,  
 Spoilt the sweet taste of the nepenthe,  
 love.

Thrones, altars, judgment-seats, and  
 prisons, wherein,  
 And beside which, by wretched men were  
 borne  
 Sceptres, tiaras, swords, and chains, and  
 tomes  
 Of reasoned wrong, glozed on by igno-  
 rance,  
 Were like those monstrous and barbaric  
 shapes,  
 The ghosts of a no more remembered  
 fame,  
 Which, from their unworn obelisks, look  
 forth  
 In triumph o'er the palaces and tombs  
 Of those who were their conquerors:  
 mouldering round  
 Those imaged to the pride of kings and  
 priests,  
 A dark yet mighty faith, a power as  
 wide

As is the world it wasted, and are now  
 But an astonishment; even so the tools  
 And emblems of its last captivity,  
 Amid the dwellings of the peopled earth,  
 Stand, not o'erthrown, but unregarded  
 now.

And those foul shapes, abhorred by god  
 and man,  
 Which, under many a name and many a  
 form,  
 Strange, savage, ghastly, dark and exe-  
 crable,  
 Were Jupiter, the tyrant of the world;  
 And which the nations, panic-stricken,  
 served  
 With blood, and hearts broken by long  
 hope, and love  
 Dragged to his altars soiled and garland-  
 less,  
 And slain among men's unreclaiming  
 tears,  
 Flattering the thing they feared, which  
 fear was hate,  
 Frown, mouldering fast, o'er their aban-  
 doned shrines:

The painted veil, by those who were,  
 called life,  
 Which mimicked, as with colors idly  
 spread,  
 All men believed and hoped, is torn  
 aside;  
 The loathsome mask has fallen, the man  
 remains, —  
 Sceptreless, free, uncircumscribed, — but  
 man:  
 Equal, unclassed, tribeless, and nation-  
 less,  
 Exempt from awe, worship, degree, the  
 king  
 Over himself; just, gentle, wise — but  
 man:  
 Passionless? no: yet free from guilt or  
 pain,  
 Which were, for his will made or suffered  
 them,  
 Nor yet exempt, tho' ruling them like  
 slaves,  
 From chance, and death, and mutability,  
 The clogs of that which else might over-  
 soar  
 The loftiest star of unascended heaven,  
 Pinnaced dim in the intense inane.

## ACT IV

SCENE. — *A Part of the Forest near the Cave  
 of PROMETHEUS. PANTHEA and  
 IONE are sleeping: they awaken  
 gradually during the first Song.*

*Voice of unseen Spirits*

The pale stars are gone!  
 For the sun, their swift shepherd,  
 To their folds them compelling,  
 In the depths of the dawn,  
 Hastes, in meteor-eclipsing array, and  
 they flee  
 Beyond his blue dwelling,  
 As fawns flee the leopard.  
 But where are ye?

*A Train of dark Forms and Shadows  
 passes by confusedly, singing.*

Here, oh, here:  
 We bear the bier  
 Of the Father of many a cancelled year!  
 Spectres we  
 Of the dead Hours be,  
 We bear Time to his tomb in eternity.

Strew, oh, strew  
 Hair, not yew!  
 Wet the dusty pall with tears, not dew!  
 Be the faded flowers  
 Of Death's bare bowers  
 Spread on the corpse of the King of  
 Hours!

Haste, oh, haste!  
 As shades are chased,  
 Trembling, by day, from heaven's blue  
 waste.  
 We melt away,  
 Like dissolving spray,  
 From the children of a diviner day,  
 With the lullaby  
 Of winds that die  
 On the bosom of their own harmony!

*Ione*

What dark forms were they?

*Panthea*

The past Hours weak and gray,  
 With the spoil which their toil  
 Raked together  
 From the conquest but One could  
 foil.

*Ione*

Have they past?

*Panthea*

They have past;  
 They outspeeded the blast,  
 While 'tis said, they are fled:

*Ione*

Whither, oh, whither?

*Panthea*

To the dark, to the past, to the dead.

*Voice of unseen Spirits*

Bright clouds float in heaven,  
 Dew-stars gleam on earth,  
 Waves assemble on ocean,  
 They are gathered and driven  
 By the storm of delight, by the panic of  
 glee!  
 They shake with emotion,  
 They dance in their mirth.  
 But where are ye?

The pine boughs are singing  
 Old songs with new gladness,  
 The billows and fountains  
 Fresh music are flinging,  
 Like the notes of a spirit from land and  
 from sea;  
 The storms mock the mountains  
 With the thunder of gladness.  
 But where are ye?

*Ione.* What charioteers are these?

*Panthea.* Where are their  
 chariots?

*Semichorus of Hours*

The voice of the Spirits of Air and of  
 Earth  
 Have drawn back the figured curtain of  
 sleep  
 Which covered our being and darkened  
 our birth  
 In the deep.

*A Voice*

In the deep?

*Semichorus II*

Oh, below the deep.

*Semichorus I*

An hundred ages we had been kept  
 Cradled in visions of hate and care,  
 And each one who waked as his brother  
 slept,  
 Found the truth—

*Semichorus II*

Worse than his visions were!

*Semichorus I*

We have heard the lute of Hope in sleep;  
 We have known the voice of Love in  
 dreams,  
 We have felt the wand of Power, and  
 leap—

*Semichorus II*

As the billows leap in the morning  
 beams!

*Chorus*

Weave the dance on the floor of the breeze,

Pierce with song heaven's silent light,  
Enchant the day that too swiftly flees,  
To check its flight ere the cave of night.

Once the hungry Hours were hounds  
Which chased the day like a bleeding deer,  
And it limped and stumbled with many wounds

Through the nightly dells of the desert year.

But now, oh weave the mystic measure  
Of music, and dance, and shapes of light,  
Let the Hours, and the spirits of might  
and pleasure,  
Like the clouds and sunbeams, unite.

*A Voice*

Unite!

*Panthea.* See, where the Spirits of the human mind  
Wrapt in sweet sounds, as in bright veils,  
approach.

*Chorus of Spirits*

We join the throng  
Of the dance and the song,  
By the whirlwind of gladness borne along;  
As the flying-fish leap  
From the Indian deep,  
And mix with the sea-birds, half asleep.

*Chorus of Hours*

Whence come ye, so wild and so fleet,  
For sandals of lightning are on your feet,  
And your wings are soft and swift as thought,  
And your eyes are as love which is veiled  
not?

*Chorus of Spirits*

We come from the mind  
Of human kind  
Which was late so dusk, and obscene,  
and blind,  
Now 'tis an ocean  
Of clear emotion,  
A heaven of serene and mighty motion

From that deep abyss  
Of wonder and bliss,  
Whose caverns are crystal palaces;  
From those skiey towers  
Where Thought's crowned powers  
Sit watching your dance, ye happy Hours!

From the dim recesses  
Of woven caresses,  
Where lovers catch ye by your loose tresses;  
From the azure isles,  
Where sweet Wisdom smiles,  
Delaying your ships with her siren wiles.

From the temples high  
Of Man's ear and eye,  
Roofed over Sculpture and Poesy;  
From the murmurings  
Of the unsealed springs  
Where Science bedews his Dædal wings.

Years after years,  
Through blood, and tears,  
And a thick hell of hatreds, and hopes,  
and fears;  
We waded and flew,  
And the islets were few  
Where the bud-blighted flowers of happiness grew.

Our feet now, every palm,  
Are sandalled with calm,  
And the dew of our wings is a rain of balm;  
And, beyond our eyes,  
The human love lies  
Which makes all it gazes on Paradise.

*Chorus of Spirits and Hours*

Then weave the web of the mystic measure;  
From the depths of the sky and the ends of the earth,  
Come, swift Spirits of might and of pleasure,  
Fill the dance and the music of mirth,  
As the waves of a thousand streams rush by  
To an ocean of splendor and harmony!

*Chorus of Spirits*

Our spoil is won,  
Our task is done,  
We are free to dive, or soar, or run;



Beyond and around,  
Or within the bound  
Which clips the world with darkness  
round.

We'll pass the eyes  
Of the starry skies  
Into the hoar deep to colonize :  
Death, Chaos, and Night,  
From the sound of our flight,  
Shall flee, like mist from a tempest's  
might.

And Earth, Air, and Light,  
And the Spirit of Might,  
Which drives round the stars in their  
fiery flight ;  
And Love, Thought, and Breath,  
The powers that quell Death,  
Wherever we soar shall assemble beneath.

And our singing shall build  
In the void's loose field  
A world for the Spirit of Wisdom to wield ;  
We will take our plan  
From the new world of man,  
And our work shall be called the Pro-  
methean.

*Chorus of Hours*

Break the dance, and scatter the song ;  
Let some depart, and some remain.

*Semichorus I*

We, beyond heaven, are driven along !

*Semichorus II*

Us the enchantments of earth retain :

*Semichorus I*

Ceaseless, and rapid, and fierce, and free,  
With the Spirits which build a new earth  
and sea,  
And a heaven where yet heaven could  
never be.

*Semichorus II*

Solemn, and slow, and serene, and bright,  
Leading the Day and outspeeding the  
Night,  
With the powers of a world of perfect  
light.

*Semichorus I*

We whirl, singing loud, round the gather-  
ing sphere,  
Till the trees, and the beasts, and the  
clouds appear  
From its chaos made calm by love, not  
fear.

*Semichorus II*

We encircle the ocean and mountains of  
earth,  
And the happy forms of its death and  
birth  
Change to the music of our sweet mirth.

*Chorus of Hours and Spirits*

Break the dance, and scatter the song,  
Let some depart, and some remain,  
Wherever we fly we lead along  
In leashes, like starbeams, soft yet strong,  
The clouds that are heavy with love's  
sweet rain.

*Panthea.* Ha ! they are gone !

*Ione.* Yet feel you no delight  
From the past sweetness ?

*Panthea.* As the bare green hill  
When some soft cloud vanishes into rain,  
Laughs with a thousand drops of sunny  
water

To the unpavilioned sky !

*Ione.* Even whilst we speak  
New notes arise. What is that awful  
sound ?

*Panthea.* 'Tis the deep music of the  
rolling world  
Kindling within the strings of the waved  
air,

Æolian modulations.

*Ione.* Listen too,  
How every pause is filled with under-  
notes,

Clear, silver, icy, keen, awakening tones,  
Which pierce the sense, and live within  
the soul,

As the sharp stars pierce winter's crystal  
air

And gaze upon themselves within the sea.

*Panthea.* But see where through two  
openings in the forest  
Which hanging branches overcanopy,  
And where two runnels of a rivulet,  
Between the close moss violet-inwoven,  
Have made their path of melody, like  
sisters

Who part with sighs that they may meet  
in smiles,  
Turning their dear disunion to an isle  
Of lovely grief, a wood of sweet sad  
thoughts;

Two visions of strange radiance float  
upon  
The ocean-like enchantment of strong  
sound,

Which flows intenser, keener, deeper yet  
Under the ground and through the wind-  
less air.

*Ione.* I see a chariot like that thinnest  
boat,  
In which the mother of the months is  
borne

By ebbing night into her western cave,  
When she upsprings from interlunar  
dreams,

O'er which is curved an orblike canopy  
Of gentle darkness, and the hills and  
woods

Distinctly seen through that dusk airy  
veil,

Regard like shapes in an enchanter's glass;  
Its wheels are solid clouds, azure and  
gold,

Such as the genii of the thunderstorm  
Pile on the floor of the illumined sea  
When the sun rushes under it; they roll  
And move and grow as with an inward  
wind;

Within it sits a winged infant, white  
Its countenance, like the whiteness of  
bright snow,

Its plumes are as feathers of sunny frost,  
Its limbs gleam white, through the wind-  
flowing folds

Of its white robe, woof of ethereal pearl.  
Its hair is white, the brightness of white  
light

Scattered in strings; yet its two eyes  
are heavens

Of liquid darkness, which the Deity  
Within seems pouring, as a storm is  
poured

From jagged clouds, out of their arrowy  
lashes,

Tempering the cold and radiant air  
around,

With fire that is not brightness: in its  
hand

It sways a quivering moonbeam, from  
whose point

A guiding power directs the chariot's  
prow

Over its wheelèd clouds, which as they roll  
Over the grass, and flowers, and waves,  
wake sounds,

Sweet as a singing rain of silver dew.

*Panthea.* And from the other opening  
in the wood

Rushes, with loud and whirlwind har-  
mony,

A sphere, which is as many thousand  
spheres,

Solid as crystal, yet through all its mass  
Flow, as through empty space, music and  
light:

Ten thousand orbs involving and in-  
volved,

Purple and azure, white, and green, and  
golden,

Sphere within sphere; and every space  
between

Peopled with unimaginable shapes,  
Such as ghosts dream dwell in the lamp-  
less deep,

Yet each inter-transpicuous, and they  
whirl

Over each other with a thousand motions,  
Upon a thousand sightless axles spinning,  
And with the force of self-destroying  
swiftness,

Intensely, slowly, solemnly roll on,  
Kindling with mingled sounds, and many  
tones,

Intelligible words and music wild.  
With mighty whirl the multitudinous orb  
Grinds the bright brook into an azure  
mist

Of elemental subtlety, like light:  
And the wild odor of the forest flowers,  
The music of the living grass and air,  
The emerald light of leaf-entangled beams  
Round its intense yet self-conflicting  
speed,

Seem kneaded into one ærial mass  
Which drowns the sense. Within the  
orb itself,

Pillowed upon its alabaster arms,  
Like to a child o'erwearied with sweet  
toil,

On its own folded wings, and wavy hair,  
The Spirit of the Earth is laid asleep,  
And you can see its little lips are moving,  
Amid the changing light of their own  
smiles,

Like one who talks of what he loves in  
dream.

*Ione.* 'Tis only mocking the orb's  
harmony.

*Panthea.* And from a star upon its  
forehead, shoot,  
Like swords of azure fire, or golden  
spears  
With tyrant-quelling myrtle overtwin'd,  
Embleming heaven and earth united now,  
Vast beams like spokes of some invisible  
wheel  
Which whirl as the orb whirls, swifter  
than thought,  
Filling the abyss with sun-like lightnings,  
And perpendicular now, and now trans-  
verse,  
Pierce the dark soil, and as they pierce  
and pass,  
Make bare the secrets of the earth's deep  
heart;  
Infinite mine of adamant and gold,  
Valueless stones, and unimagined gems,  
And caverns on crystalline columns poised  
With vegetable silver overspread;  
Wells of unfathomed fire, and water  
springs  
Whence the great sea, even as a child is  
fed,  
Whose vapors clothe earth's monarch  
mountain-tops  
With kingly ermine snow. The beams  
flash on  
And make appear the melancholy ruins  
Of cancelled cycles; anchors, beaks of  
ships;  
Planks turned to marble; quivers, helms,  
and spears,  
And gorgon-headed targes, and the wheels  
Of scythèd chariots and the emblazonry  
Of trophies, standards, and armorial  
beasts,  
Round which death laughed, sepulchred  
emblems  
Of dead destruction, ruin within ruin!  
The wrecks beside of many a city vast,  
Whose population which the earth grew  
over  
Was mortal, but not human; see, they lie,  
Their monstrous works, and uncouth  
skeletons,  
Their statues, homes and fanes; pro-  
digious shapes  
Huddled in gray annihilation, split,  
Jammed in the hard, black deep; and  
over these,  
The anatomies of unknown wingèd  
things,  
And fishes which were isles of living  
scale,

And serpents, bony chains, twisted  
around  
The iron crags, or within heaps of dust  
To which the tortuous strength of their  
last pangs  
Had crushed the iron crags; and over  
these  
The jaggèd alligator, and the might  
Of earth-convulsing behemoth, which  
once  
Were monarch beasts, and on the slimy  
shores,  
And weed-overgrown continents of earth,  
Increased and multiplied like summer  
worms  
On an abandoned corpse, till the blue  
globe  
Wrapt deluge round it like a cloak, and  
they  
Yelled, gasped, and were abolished; or  
some God  
Whose throne was in a comet, passed, and  
cried,  
Be not! And like my words they were  
no more.

#### *The Earth*

The joy, the triumph, the delight, the  
madness!  
The boundless, overflowing, bursting  
gladness,  
The vaporous exultation not to be con-  
fined!  
Ha! ha! the animation of delight  
Which wraps me, like an atmosphere of  
light,  
And bears me as a cloud is borne by its  
own wind.

#### *The Moon*

Brother mine, calm wanderer,  
Happy globe of land and air,  
Some Spirit is darted like a beam from  
thee,  
Which penetrates my frozen frame,  
And passes with the warmth of flame,  
With love, and odor, and deep melody  
Through me, through me!

#### *The Earth*

Ha! ha! the caverns of my hollow  
mountains,  
My cloven fire-crags, sound-exulting  
fountains

Laugh with a vast and inextinguishable  
laughter.

The oceans, and the deserts, and the  
abysses,

And the deep air's unmeasured wilder-  
nesses,

Answer from all their clouds and billows,  
echoing after.

They cry aloud as I do. Sceptred curse,  
Who all our green and azure universe  
Threatenedst to muffle round with black  
destruction, sending

A solid cloud to rain hot thunder-  
stones,

And splinter and knead down my  
children's bones,

All I bring forth, to one void mass, batter-  
ing and blending.

Until each crag-like tower, and storied  
column,

Palace, and obelisk, and temple solemn,  
My imperial mountains crowned with  
cloud, and snow, and fire;

My sea-like forests, every blade and  
blossom,

Which finds a grave or cradle in my  
bosom,

Were stamped by thy strong hate into a  
lifeless mire.

How art thou sunk, withdrawn,  
covered, drunk up

By thirsty nothing, as the brackish cup  
Drained by a desert-troop, a little drop  
for all;

And from beneath, around, within,  
above,

Filling thy void annihilation, love

Burst in like light on caves cloven by the  
thunder-ball.

#### *The Moon*

The snow upon my lifeless mountains

Is loosened into living fountains,

My solid oceans flow, and sing, and shine :

A spirit from my heart bursts forth,

It clothes with unexpected birth

My cold bare bosom : Oh ! it must be  
thine

On mine, on mine !

Gazing on thee, I feel, I know

Green stalks burst forth, and bright  
flowers grow,

And living shapes upon my bosom move :

Music is in the sea and air,

Winged clouds soar here and there,

Dark with the rain new buds are dream-  
ing of :

'Tis love, all love !

#### *The Earth*

It interpenetrates my granite mass,

Through tangled roots and trodden clay  
doth pass,

Into the utmost leaves and delicatest  
flowers ;

Upon the winds, among the clouds 'tis  
spread,

It wakes a life in the forgotten dead,  
They breathe a spirit up from their  
obscurest bowers.

And like a storm bursting its cloudy  
prison

With thunder, and with whirlwind, has  
arisen

Out of the lampless caves of unimagined  
being :

With earthquake shock and swiftmess  
making shiver

Thought's stagnant chaos, unremoved  
for ever,

Till hate, and fear, and pain, light-van-  
quished shadows, fleeing,

Leave Man, who was a many-sided  
mirror,

Which could distort to many a shape of  
error,

This true fair world of things, a sea re-  
flecting love ;

Which over all his kind as the sun's  
heaven

Gliding o'er ocean, smooth, serene, and  
even

Darting from starry depths radiance and  
life, doth move,

Leave Man, even as a leprous child is  
left.

Who follows a sick beast to some warm  
cleft

Of rocks, through which the might of  
healing springs is poured ;

Then when it wanders home with rosy  
smile,

Unconscious, and its mother fears  
awhile

It is a spirit, then, weeps on her child  
restored —

Man, oh, not men! a chain of linkèd  
 thought,  
 Of love and might to be divided not,  
 Compelling the elements with adaman-  
 tine stress;  
 As the sun rules, even with a tyrant's  
 gaze,  
 The unquiet republic of the maze  
 Of planets, struggling fierce towards  
 heaven's free wilderness —

Man, one harmonious soul of many a  
 soul,  
 Whose nature is its own divine control,  
 Where all things flow to all, as' rivers to  
 the sea;  
 Familiar acts are beautiful through love;  
 Labor, and pain, and grief, in life's  
 green grove  
 Sport like tame beasts, none knew how  
 gentle they could be!

His will, with all mean passions, bad  
 delights,  
 And selfish cares, its trembling  
 satellites,  
 A spirit ill to guide, but mighty to obey,  
 Is as a tempest-wingèd ship, whose helm  
 Love rules, through waves which dare  
 not overwhelm,  
 Forcing life's wildest shores to own its  
 sovereign sway.

All things confess his strength.  
 Through the cold mass  
 Of marble and of color his dreams pass;  
 Bright threads whence mothers weave the  
 robes their children wear;  
 Language is a perpetual orphic song,  
 Which rules with Dædal harmony a  
 throng  
 Of thoughts and forms, which else sense-  
 less and shapeless were.

The lightning is his slave; heaven's  
 utmost deep  
 Gives up her stars, and like a flock of  
 sheep  
 They pass before his eye, are numbered,  
 and roll on!  
 The tempest is his steed, he strides the  
 air;  
 And the abyss shouts from her depth  
 laid bare,  
 Heaven, hast thou secrets? Man unveils  
 me; I have none.

### *The Moon*

The shadow of white death has past  
 From my path in heaven at last,  
 A clinging shroud of solid frost and sleep;  
 And through my newly-woven bowers,  
 Wander happy paramours,  
 Less mighty, but as mild as those who keep  
 Thy vales more deep.

### *The Earth*

As the dissolving warmth of dawn may  
 fold  
 A half unfrozen dew-globe, green and  
 gold,  
 And crystalline, till it becomes a wingèd  
 mist,  
 And wanders up the vault of the blue  
 day,  
 Outlives the noon, and on the sun's last  
 ray  
 Hangs o'er the sea, a fleece of fire and  
 amethyst.

### *The Moon*

Thou art folded, thou art lying  
 In the light which is undying  
 Of thine own joy, and heaven's smile  
 divine;  
 All suns and constellations shower  
 On thee a light, a life, a power  
 Which doth array thy sphere; thou pour-  
 est thine  
 On mine, on mine!

### *The Earth*

I spin beneath my pyramid of night,  
 Which points into the heavens dream-  
 ing delight,  
 Murmuring victorious joy in my en-  
 chanted sleep;  
 As a youth lulled in love-dreams faintly  
 sighing,  
 Under the shadows of his beauty lying,  
 Which round his rest a watch of light and  
 warmth doth keep.

### *The Moon*

As in the soft and sweet eclipse,  
 When soul meets soul on lovers' lips,  
 High hearts are calm, and brightest eyes  
 are dull;  
 So when thy shadow falls on me,  
 Then am I mute and still, by thee  
 Covered; of thy love, Orb most beautiful,  
 Full, oh, too full!



Thou art speeding round the sun  
 Brightest world of many a one:  
 Green and azure sphere which shinest  
 With a light which is divinest  
 Among all the lamps of Heaven  
 To whom life and light is given,  
 I, thy crystal paramour,  
 Borne beside thee by a power  
 Like the polar Paradise,  
 Magnet-like of lovers' eyes;  
 I, a most enamored maiden  
 Whose weak brain is overladen  
 With the pleasure of her love,  
 Maniac-like around thee move  
 Gazing, an insatiate bride,  
 On thy form from every side  
 Like a Mænad, round the cup  
 Which Agave lifted up  
 In the weird Cadmæan forest.  
 Brother, whereso'er thou soarest  
 I must hurry, whirl and follow  
 Through the heavens wide and hollow,  
 Sheltered by the warm embrace  
 Of thy soul from hungry space,  
 Drinking from thy sense and sight  
 Beauty, majesty, and might,  
 As a lover or chameleon  
 Grows like what it looks upon  
 As a violet's gentle eye  
 Gazes on the azure sky  
 Until its hue grows like what it oenoids,  
 As a gray and watery mist  
 Glows like solid amethyst  
 Athwart the western mountain it enfolds,  
 When the sunset sleeps  
 Upon its snow.

*The Earth*

And the weak day weeps  
 That it should be so.  
 Oh, gentle Moon, the voice of thy de-  
 light  
 Falls on me like thy clear and tender  
 light  
 Soothing the seaman, borne the summer  
 night,  
 Through isles for ever calm:  
 Oh, gentle Moon, thy crystal accents  
 pierce  
 The caverns of my pride's deep universe,  
 Charming the tiger joy, whose trappings  
 fierce  
 Made wounds which need thy balm.

*Panthea.* I rise as from a bath of  
 sparkling water,

A bath of azure light, among dark rocks,  
 Out of the stream of sound.

*Ione.* Ah me! sweet sister,  
 The stream of sound has ebbed away  
 from us,  
 And you pretend to rise out of its wave,  
 Because your words fall like the clear,  
 soft dew  
 Shaken from a bathing wood-nymph's  
 limbs and hair.

*Panthea.* Peace! peace! A mighty  
 Power, which is as darkness,  
 Is rising out of Earth, and from the sky  
 Is showered like night, and from within  
 the air  
 Bursts, like eclipse which had been  
 gathered up  
 Into the pores of sunlight: the bright  
 visions,  
 Wherein the singing spirits rode and  
 shone,  
 Gleam like pale meteors through a watery  
 night.

*Ione.* There is a sense of words upon  
 mine ear.

*Panthea.* An universal sound like  
 words: Oh, list!

*Demogorgon*

Thou, Earth, calm empire of a happy  
 soul,  
 Sphere of divinest shapes and har-  
 monies,  
 Beautiful orb! gathering as thou dost  
 roll  
 The love which paves thy path along  
 the skies:

*The Earth*

I hear: I am as a drop of dew that  
 dies.

*Demogorgon*

Thou, Moon, which gazest on the nightly  
 Earth  
 With wonder, as it gazes upon thee;  
 Whilst each to men, and beasts, and the  
 swift birth  
 Of birds, is beauty, love, calm, har-  
 mony:

*The Moon*

I hear: I am a leaf shaken by thee!

*Demogorgon*

Ye kings of suns and stars, Demons and  
 Gods,  
 Ethereal Dominations, who possess  
 Elysian, windless, fortunate abodes  
 Beyond Heaven's constellated wilder-  
 ness :

*A Voice from above*

Our great Republic hears, we are blest.  
 and bless.

*Demogorgon*

Ye happy dead, whom beams of brightest  
 verse  
 Are clouds to hide, not colors to por-  
 tray,  
 Whether your nature is that universe  
 Which once ye saw and suffered —

*A Voice from beneath*

Or as they  
 Whom we have left, we change and  
 pass away.

*Demogorgon*

Ye elemental Genii, who have homes  
 From man's high mind even to the  
 central stone  
 Of sullen lead; from Heaven's star-  
 fretted domes  
 To the dull weed some sea-worm  
 battens on :

*A confused Voice*

We hear: thy words waken Oblivion.

*Demogorgon*

Spirits, whose homes are flesh: ye beasts  
 and birds,  
 Ye worms, and fish; ye living leaves  
 and buds;  
 Lightning and wind; and ye untameable  
 herds,  
 Meteors and mists, which throng air's  
 solitudes: —

*A Voice*

Thy voice to us is wind among still  
 woods.

*Demogorgon*

Man, who wert once a despot and a slave;  
 A dupe and a deceiver; a decay;  
 A traveller from the cradle to the grave  
 Through the dim night of this im-  
 mortal day:

*All*

Speak; thy strong words may never  
 pass away.

*Demogorgon*

This is the day, which down the void  
 abyssm  
 At the Earth-born's spell yawns for  
 Heaven's despotism,  
 And Conquest is dragged captive  
 through the deep:  
 Love, from its awful throne of patient  
 power  
 In the wise heart, from the last giddy  
 hour  
 Of dead endurance, from the slippery,  
 steep,  
 And narrow verge of crag-like agony,  
 springs  
 And folds over the world its healing  
 wings.

Gentleness, Virtue, Wisdom, and Endur-  
 ance,  
 These are the seals of that most firm  
 assurance  
 Which bars the pit over Destruction's  
 strength;  
 And if, with infirm hand, Eternity,  
 Mother of many acts and hours, should  
 free  
 The serpent that would clasp her with  
 his length;  
 These are the spells by which to  
 reassume  
 An empire o'er the disentangled doom.

To suffer woes which Hope thinks in-  
 finite;  
 To forgive wrongs darker than death or  
 night;  
 To defy Power, which seems omni-  
 potent;  
 To love, and bear; to hope till Hope  
 creates  
 From its own wreck the thing it contem-  
 plates;

Neither to change, nor falter, nor repent;  
 This, like thy glory, Titan, is to be  
 Good, great and joyous, beautiful and free;  
 This is alone Life, Joy, Empire, and  
 Victory.<sup>1</sup> *September 1818-1819.*

1820.

<sup>1</sup> The prominent feature of Shelley's theory of the destiny of the human species was that evil is not inherent in the system of the creation, but an accident that might be expelled. This also forms a portion of Christianity: God made earth and man perfect, till he, by his fall,

"Brought death into the world and all our woe."

Shelley believed that mankind had only to will that there should be no evil, and there would be none. It is not my part in these Notes to notice the arguments that have been urged against this opinion, but to mention the fact that he entertained it, and was indeed attached to it with fervent enthusiasm. That man could be so perfectionized as to be able to expel evil from his own nature, and from the greater part of the creation, was the cardinal point of his system. And the subject he loved best to dwell on was the image of One warring with the Evil Principle, oppressed not only by it, but by all—even the good, who were deluded into considering evil a necessary portion of humanity; a victim full of fortitude and hope and the spirit of triumph, emanating from a reliance in the ultimate omnipotence of Good. Such he had depicted in his last poem, when he made Laon the enemy and the victim of tyrants. He now took a more idealized image of the same subject. He followed certain classical authorities in figuring Saturn as the good principle, Jupiter the usurping evil one, and Prometheus as the regenerator, who, unable to bring mankind back to primitive innocence, used knowledge as a weapon to defeat evil, by leading mankind, beyond the state wherein they are sinless through ignorance, to that in which they are virtuous through wisdom. Jupiter punished the temerity of the Titan by chaining him to a rock of Caucasus, and causing a vulture to devour his still-renewed heart. There was a prophecy afloat in heaven portending the fall of Jove, the secret of averting which was known only to Prometheus; and the god offered freedom from torture on condition of its being communicated to him. According to the mythological story, this referred to the offspring of Thetis, who was destined to be greater than his father. Prometheus at last bought pardon for his crime of enriching mankind with his gifts, by revealing the prophecy. Hercules killed the vulture, and set him free; and Thetis was married to Peleus, the father of Achilles.

Shelley adapted the catastrophe of this story to his peculiar views. The son greater than his father, born of the nuptials of Jupiter and Thetis, was to dethrone Evil, and bring back a happier reign than that of Saturn. Prometheus defies the power of his enemy, and endures centuries of torture; till the hour arrives when Jove, blind to the real event, but darkly guessing that some great good to himself will flow, espouses Thetis. At the moment, the Primal Power of the world drives him from his usurped throne, and Strength, in the person of Hercules, liberates Humanity, typified in Prometheus, from the tortures generated by evil done or suffered. Asia, one of the Oceanides, is the wife

## THE SENSITIVE PLANT

## PART FIRST

A SENSITIVE Plant in a garden grew,  
 And the young winds fed it with silver dew,  
 And it opened its fan-like leaves to the light,  
 And closed them beneath the kisses of night.

And the Spring arose on the garden fair,  
 Like the Spirit of Love felt everywhere;  
 And each flower and herb on Earth's dark breast  
 Rose from the dreams of its wintry rest.

But none ever trembled and panted with bliss  
 In the garden, the field, or the wilderness,  
 Like a doe in the noontide with love's sweet want,  
 As the companionless Sensitive Plant.

The snowdrop and then the violet,  
 Arose from the ground with warm rain wet,

of Prometheus—she was, according to other mythological interpretations, the same as Venus and Nature. When the benefactor of mankind is liberated, Nature resumes the beauty of her prime, and is united to her husband, the emblem of the human race, in perfect and happy union. In the fourth Act, the Poet gives further scope to his imagination, and idealizes the forms of creation—such as we know them, instead of such as they appeared to the Greeks. Maternal Earth, the mighty parent, is superseded by the Spirit of the Earth, the guide of our planet through the realms of sky; while his fair and weaker companion and attendant, the Spirit of the Moon, receives bliss from the annihilation of Evil in the superior sphere.

Shelley develops more particularly in the lyrics of this drama his abstruse and imaginative theories with regard to the creation. It requires a mind as subtle and penetrating as his own to understand the mystic meanings scattered throughout the poem. They elude the ordinary reader by their abstraction and delicacy of distinction, but they are far from vague. It was his design to write prose metaphysical essays on the nature of Man, which would have served to explain much of what is obscure in his poetry; a few scattered fragments of observations and remarks alone remain. He considered these philosophical views of Mind and Nature to be instinct with the intensest spirit of poetry.

More popular poets clothe the ideal with familiar and sensible imagery. Shelley loved to idealize the real—to gift the mechanism of the material universe with a soul and a voice, and to bestow such also on the most delicate and abstract emotions and thoughts of the mind. Sophocles was his great master in this species of imagery. (*From Mrs. Shelley's Note.*)

And their breath was mixed with fresh  
odor, sent  
From the turf, like the voice and the  
instrument.

Then the pied wind-flowers and the tulip  
tall,  
And narcissi, the fairest among them all,  
Who gaze on their eyes in the stream's  
recess,  
Till they die of their own dear loveliness ;

And the Naiad-like lily of the vale,  
Whom youth makes so fair and passion so  
pale,  
That the light of its tremulous bells is seen  
Through their pavilions of tender green ;

And the hyacinth purple, and white, and  
blue,  
Which flung from its bells a sweet peal  
anew  
Of music so delicate, soft, and intense,  
It was felt like an odor within the sense ;

And the rose like a nymph to the bath  
address,  
Which unveiled the depth of her glowing  
breast,  
Till, fold after fold, to the fainting air  
The soul of her beauty and love lay bare :

And the wand-like lily, which lifted up,  
As a Mænad, its moonlight-colored cup,  
Till the fiery star, which is its eye,  
Gazed through clear dew on the tender  
sky ;

And the jessamine faint, and the sweet  
tuberoses,  
The sweetest flower for scent that blows ;  
And all rare blossoms from every clime  
Grew in that garden in perfect prime.

And on the stream whose inconstant  
bosom  
Was pranked under boughs of embowering  
blossom,  
With golden and green light, slanting  
through  
Their heaven of many a tangled hue,

Broad water-lilies lay tremulously,  
And starry river-buds glimmered by,  
And around them the soft stream did  
glide and dance  
With a motion of sweet sound and radi-  
ance.

And the sinuous paths of lawn and of moss,  
Which led through the garden, along and  
across,  
Some open at once to the sun and the  
breeze,  
Some lost among bowers of blossoming  
trees,

Were all paved with daisies and delicate  
bells  
As fair as the fabulous asphodels,  
And flowrets which drooping as day  
drooped too  
Fell into pavilions, white, purple, and blue,  
To roof the glow-worm from the evening  
dew.

And from this undefiled Paradise  
The flowers (as an infant's awakening  
eyes  
Smile on its mother, whose singing sweet  
Can first lull, and at last must awaken it),

When Heaven's blithe winds had un-  
folded them,  
As mine-lamps enkindle a hidden gem,  
Shone smiling to Heaven, and every one  
Shared joy in the light of the gentle sun ;

For each one was interpenetrated  
With the light and the odor its neighbor  
shed,  
Like young lovers whom youth and love  
make dear  
Wrapped and filled by their mutual  
atmosphere.

But the Sensitive Plant which could give  
small fruit  
Of the love which it felt from the leaf to  
the root,  
Received more than all, it loved more  
than ever,  
Where none wanted but it, could belong  
to the giver,

For the Sensitive Plant has no bright  
flower ;  
Radiance and odor are not its dower ;  
It loves, even like Love, its deep heart  
is full,  
It desires what it has not, the beautiful !

The light winds which from unsustaining  
wings,  
Shed the music of many murmurings ;

The beams which dart from many a star  
Of the flowers whose hues they bear afar;

The plumed insects swift and free,  
Like golden boats on a sunny sea,  
Laden with light and odor, which pass  
Over the gleam of the living grass;

The unseen clouds of the dew, which lie  
Like fire in the flowers till the sun rides  
high,  
Then wander like spirits among the  
spheres,  
Each cloud faint with the fragrance it  
bears;

The quivering vapors of dim noontide,  
Which like a sea o'er the warm earth glide,  
In which every sound, and odor, and beam,  
Move, as reeds in a single stream;

Each and all like ministering angels were  
For the Sensitive Plant sweet joy to bear,  
Whilst the lagging hours of the day went  
by  
Like windless clouds o'er a tender sky.

And when evening descended from  
heaven above,  
And the Earth was all rest, and the air  
was all love,  
And delight, tho' less bright, was far more  
deep,  
And the day's veil fell from the world of  
sleep,

And the beasts, and the birds, and the  
insects were drowned  
In an ocean of dreams without a sound;  
Whose waves never mark, tho' they ever  
impress  
The light sand which paves it, conscious-  
ness;

(Only overhead the sweet nightingale  
Ever sang more sweet as the day might  
fail,  
And snatches of its Elysian chant  
Were mixed with the dreams of the  
Sensitive Plant.)

The Sensitive Plant was the earliest  
Up-gathered into the bosom of rest;  
A sweet child weary of its delight,  
The feeblest and yet the favorite,  
Cradled within the embrace of night.

## PART SECOND

There was a Power in this sweet place,  
An Eve in this Eden; a ruling grace  
Which to the flowers did they waken or  
dream,  
Was as God is to the starry scheme.

A Lady, the wonder of her kind,  
Whose form was upborne by a lovely  
mind  
Which, dilating, had moulded her mien  
and motion  
Like a sea-flower unfolded beneath the  
ocean,

Tended the garden from morn to even:  
And the meteors of that sublunar heaven,  
Like the lamps of the air when night  
walks forth,  
Laughed round her footsteps up from the  
Earth!

She had no companion of mortal race,  
But her tremulous breath and her flushing  
face  
Told, whilst the morn kissed the sleep  
from her eyes,  
That her dreams were less slumber than  
Paradise:

As if some bright Spirit for her sweet sake  
Had deserted heaven while the stars were  
awake,  
As if yet around her he lingering were,  
Tho' the veil of daylight concealed him  
from her.

Her step seemed to pity the grass it  
pressed;  
You might hear by the heaving of her  
breast,  
That the coming and going of the wind  
Brought pleasure there and left passion  
behind.

And wherever her airy footstep trod,  
Her trailing hair from the grassy sod  
Erased its light vestige, with shadowy  
sweep,  
Like a sunny storm o'er the dark green  
deep.

I doubt not the flowers of that garden  
sweet  
Rejoiced in the sound of her gentle feet;



## PART THIRD

I doubt not they felt the spirit that  
came  
From her glowing fingers thro' all their  
frame.

She sprinkled bright water from the  
stream  
On those that were faint with the sunny  
beam;  
And out of the cups of the heavy flowers  
She emptied the rain of the thunder  
showers.

She lifted their heads with her tender  
hands,  
And sustained them with rods and osier  
bands;  
If the flowers had been her own infants,  
she  
Could never have nursed them more  
tenderly.

And all killing insects and gnawing  
worms,  
And things of obscene and unlovely  
forms,  
She bore in a basket of Indian woof,  
Into the rough woods far aloof,

In a basket, of grasses and wild-flowers  
full,  
The freshest her gentle hands could pull  
For the poor banished insects, whose  
intent,  
Although they did ill, was innocent.

But the bee and the beamlike ephemeris  
Whose path is the lightning's, and soft  
moths that kiss  
The sweet lips of the flowers, and harm  
not, did she  
Make her attendant angels be.

And many an antenatal tomb,  
Where butterflies dream of the life to  
come,  
She left clinging round the smooth and  
dark  
Edge of the odorous cedar bark.

This fairest creature from earliest spring  
Thus moved through the garden minister-  
ing  
All the sweet season of summer tide,  
And ere the first leaf looked brown — she  
died!

Three days the flowers of the garden fair,  
Like stars when the moon is awakened,  
were,  
Or the waves of Baïæ, ere luminous  
She floats up through the smoke of  
Vesuvius.

And on the fourth, the Sensitive Plant  
Felt the sound of the funeral chant,  
And the steps of the bearers, heavy and  
slow,  
And the sobs of the mourners deep and  
low;

The weary sound and the heavy breath,  
And the silent motions of passing death,  
And the smell, cold, oppressive, and dank,  
Sent through the pores of the coffin  
plank;

The dark grass, and the flowers among the  
grass,  
Were bright with tears as the crowd did  
pass;  
From their sighs the wind caught a  
mournful tone,  
And safe in the pines, and gave groan for  
groan.

The garden once fair, became cold and  
foul,  
Like the corpse of her who had been its  
soul,  
Which at first was lovely as if in sleep,  
Then slowly changed, till it grew a heap  
To make men tremble who never weep.

Swift summer into the autumn flowed,  
And frost in the mist of the morning rode,  
Though the noonday sun looked clear  
and bright,  
Mocking the spoil of the secret night.

The rose leaves, like flakes of crimson  
snow,  
Paved the turf and the moss below.  
The lilies were drooping, and white, and  
wan,  
Like the head and the skin of a dying man

And Indian plants, of scent and hue  
The sweetest that ever were fed on dew,  
Leaf by leaf, day after day,  
Were massed into the common clay.

And the leaves, brown, yellow, and gray,  
 and red,  
 And white with the whiteness of what is  
 dead,  
 Like troops of ghosts on the dry wind  
 past;  
 Their whistling noise made the birds  
 aghast.

And the gusty winds waked the wingèd  
 seeds,  
 Out of their birthplace of ugly weeds,  
 Till they clung round many a sweet  
 flower's stem,  
 Which rotted into the earth with them.

The water-blooms under the rivulet  
 Fell from the stalks on which they were  
 set;  
 And the eddies drove them here and there,  
 As the winds did those of the upper air.

Then the rain came down, and the broken  
 stalks,  
 Were bent and tangled across the walks;  
 And the leafless network of parasite  
 bowers  
 Massed into ruin; and all sweet flowers.

Between the time of the wind and the  
 snow,  
 All loathliest weeds began to grow,  
 Whose coarse leaves were splashed with  
 many a speck,  
 Like the water-snake's belly and the  
 toad's back.

And thistles, and nettles, and darnels rank,  
 And the dock, and henbane, and hemlock  
 dank,  
 Stretched out its long and hollow shank,  
 And stifled the air till the dead wind  
 stank.

And plants, at whose names the verse  
 feels loath,  
 Filled the place with a monstrous under  
 growth,  
 Prickly, and pulpous, and blistering, and  
 blue,  
 Livid, and starred with a lurid dew.

And agarics, and fungi, with mildew and  
 mould  
 Started like mist from the wet ground  
 cold;

Pale, fleshy, as if the decaying dead  
 With a spirit of growth had been ani-  
 mated!

Spawn, weeds, and filth, a leprous scum,  
 Made the running rivulet thick and dumb  
 And at its outlet flags huge as stakes  
 Dammed it up with roots knotted like  
 water snakes.

And hour by hour, when the air was still,  
 The vapors arose which have strength to  
 kill;  
 At morn they were seen, at noon they  
 were felt,  
 At night they were darkness no star could  
 melt.

And unctuous meteors from spray to  
 spray  
 Crept and flitted in broad noonday  
 Unseen; every branch on which they  
 alit  
 By a venomous blight was burned and  
 bit.

The Sensitive Plant like one forbid  
 Wept, and the tears within each lid  
 Of its folded leaves which together grew  
 Were changed to a blight of frozen glue.

For the leaves soon fell, and the branches  
 soon  
 By the heavy axe of the blast were hewn;  
 The sap shrank to the root through every  
 pore  
 As blood to a heart that will beat no more.

For Winter came: the wind was his  
 whip:  
 One choppy finger was on his lip:  
 He had torn the cataracts from the hills  
 And they clanked at his girdle like man-  
 acles;

His breath was a chain which without a  
 sound  
 The earth, and the air, and the water  
 bound;  
 He came, fiercely driven, in his chariot-  
 throne  
 By the tenfold blasts of the arctic zone.

Then the weeds which were forms of  
 living death  
 Fled from the frost to the earth beneath.

Their decay and sudden flight from frost  
Was but like the vanishing of a ghost !

And under the roots of the Sensitive Plant  
The moles and the dormice died for  
want :

The birds dropped stiff from the frozen  
air

And were caught in the branches naked  
and bare.

First there came down a thawing rain  
And its dull drops froze on the boughs  
again,  
Then there steamed up a freezing dew  
Which to the drops of the thaw-rain  
grew ;

And a northern whirlwind, wandering  
about  
Like a wolf that had smelt a dead child  
out,  
Shook the boughs thus laden, and heavy  
and stiff,  
And snapped them off with his rigid griff.

When winter had gone and spring came  
back  
The Sensitive Plant was a leafless wreck ;  
But the mandrakes, and toadstools, and  
docks, and darnels,  
Rose like the dead from their ruined  
charnels.

#### CONCLUSION

Whether the Sensitive Plant, or that  
Which within its boughs like a spirit  
sat  
Ere its outward form had known decay,  
Now felt this change, I cannot say.

Whether that lady's gentle mind,  
No longer with the form combined  
Which scattered love, as stars do light,  
Found sadness, where it left delight,

I dare not guess ; but in this life  
Of error, ignorance, and strife,  
Where nothing is, but all things seem,  
And we the shadows of the dream,

It is a modest creed, and yet  
Pleasant if one considers it,  
To own that death itself must be,  
Like all the rest, a mockery.

That garden sweet, that lady fair,  
And all sweet shapes and odors there,  
In truth have never passed away :  
'Tis we, 'tis ours, are changed ; not they.  
1820. 1820.

#### THE CLOUD

I BRING fresh showers for the thirsting  
flowers,  
From the seas and the streams ;  
I bear light shade for the leaves when laid  
In their noonday dreams.  
From my wings are shaken the dews that  
waken  
The sweet buds every one,  
When rocked to rest on their mother's  
breast,  
As she dances about the sun.  
I wield the flail of the lashing hail,  
And whiten the green plains under,  
And then again I dissolve 'it in rain,  
And laugh as I pass in thunder.

I sift the snow on the mountains below,  
And their great pines groan aghast ;  
And all the night 'tis my pillow white,  
While I sleep in the arms of the blast.  
Sublime on the towers of my skiey bowers,  
Lightning my pilot sits,  
In a cavern under is fettered the thunder,  
It struggles and howls at fits ;  
Over earth and ocean, with gentle motion,  
This pilot is guiding me,  
Lured by the love of the genii that move  
In the depths of the purple sea ;  
Over the rills, and the crags, and the hills,  
Over the lakes and the plains,  
Wherever he dream, under mountain or  
stream,  
The Spirit he loves remains ;  
And I all the while bask in heaven's blue  
smile,  
Whilst he is dissolving in rains.

The sanguine sunrise, with his meteor  
eyes,  
And his burning plumes outspread,  
Leaps on the back of my sailing rack,  
When the morning star shines dead,  
As on the jag of a mountain crag,  
Which an earthquake rocks and  
swings,  
An eagle alit one moment may sit  
In the light of its golden wings.

And when sunset may breathe, from the  
 lit sea beneath,  
 Its ardors of rest and of love,  
 And the crimson pall of eve may fall  
 From the depth of heaven above,  
 With wings folded I rest, on mine airy  
 nest,  
 As still as a brooding dove.

That orbèd maiden with white fire laden,  
 Whom mortals call the moon,  
 Glides glimmering o'er my fleece-like floor,  
 By the midnight breezes strewn;  
 And wherever the beat of her unseen feet,  
 Which only the angels hear,  
 May have broken the woof of my tent's  
 thin roof,  
 The stars peep behind her and peer;  
 And I laugh to see them whirl and flee,  
 Like a swarm of golden bees,  
 When I widen the rent in my wind-built  
 tent,  
 Till the calm rivers, lakes, and seas,  
 Like strips of the sky fallen through me on  
 high,  
 Are each paved with the moon and  
 these.

I bind the sun's throne with a burning  
 zone,  
 And the moon's with a girdle of  
 pearl;  
 The volcanoes are dim, and the stars reel  
 and swim,  
 When the whirlwinds my banner  
 unfurl.  
 From cape to cape, with a bridge-like  
 shape,  
 Over a torrent sea,  
 Sunbeam-proof, I hang like a roof,  
 The mountains its columns be.  
 The triumphal arch through which I  
 march  
 With hurricane, fire, and snow,  
 When the powers of the air are chained to  
 my chair,  
 Is the million-colored bow;  
 The sphere-fire above its soft colors wove,  
 While the moist earth was laughing  
 below.

I am the daughter of earth and water,  
 And the nursling of the sky;  
 I pass through the pores of the ocean and  
 shores;  
 I change, but I cannot die.

For after the rain when with never a  
 stain,  
 The pavilion of heaven is bare,  
 And the winds and sunbeams with their  
 convex gleams,  
 Build up the blue dome of air,  
 I silently laugh at my own cenotaph,  
 And out of the caverns of rain,  
 Like a child from the womb, like a ghost  
 from the tomb,  
 I arise and unbuild it again.

1820. 1820.

### TO A SKYLARK

HAIL to thee, blithe spirit!  
 Bird thou never wert,  
 That from heaven, or near it,  
 Pourest thy full heart  
 In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

Higher still and higher  
 From the earth thou springest  
 Like a cloud of fire;  
 The blue deep thou wingest,  
 And singing still dost soar, and soaring  
 ever singest.

In the golden lightning  
 Of the sunken sun,  
 O'er which clouds are brightning,  
 Thou dost float and run;  
 Like an unbodied joy whose race is just  
 begun.

The pale purple even  
 Melts around thy flight;  
 Like a star of heaven,  
 In the broad daylight  
 Thou art unseen, but yet I hear thy shrill  
 delight,

Keen as are the arrows  
 Of that silver sphere,  
 Whose intense lamp narrows  
 In the white dawn clear,  
 Until we hardly see, we feel that it is  
 there.

All the earth and air  
 With thy voice is loud,  
 As, when night is bare,  
 From one lonely cloud  
 The moon rains out her beams, and  
 heaven is overflowed.

What thou art we know not;  
 What is most like thee?  
 From rainbow clouds there flow not  
 Drops so bright to see,  
 As from thy presence showers a rain of  
 melody.

Like a poet hidden  
 In the light of thought,  
 Singing hymns unbidden,  
 Till the world is wrought  
 To sympathy with hopes and fears it  
 heeded not:

Like a high-born maiden  
 In a palace-tower,  
 Soothing her love-laden  
 Soul in secret hour  
 With music sweet as love, which overflows  
 her bower:

Like a glow-worm golden  
 In a dell of dew,  
 Scattering unbidden  
 Its ærial hue  
 Among the flowers and grass, which  
 screen it from the view:

Like a rose embowered  
 In its own green leaves,  
 By warm winds deflowered,  
 Till the scent it gives  
 Makes faint with too much sweet these  
 heavy-wingèd thieves:

Sound of vernal showers  
 On the twinkling grass,  
 Rain-awakened flowers,  
 All that ever was  
 Joyous, and clear, and fresh, thy music  
 doth surpass:

Teach us, sprite or bird,  
 What sweet thoughts are thine:  
 I have never heard  
 Praise of love or wine  
 That panted forth a flood of rapture so  
 divine.

Chorus Hymeneal,  
 Or triumphal chant,  
 Matched with thine would be all  
 But an empty vaunt,  
 A thing wherein we feel there is some  
 hidden want.

What objects are the fountains  
 Of thy happy strain?  
 What fields, or waves, or mountains?  
 What shapes of sky or plain?  
 What love of thine own kind? what  
 ignorance of pain?

With thy clear keen joyance  
 Languor cannot be:  
 Shadow of annoyance  
 Never came near thee:  
 Thou lovest; but ne'er knew love's sad  
 satiety.

Waking or asleep,  
 Thou of death must deem  
 Things more true and deep  
 Than we mortals dream,  
 Or how could thy notes flow in such a  
 crystal stream?

We look before and after,  
 And pine for what is not:  
 Our sincerest laughter  
 With some pain is fraught;  
 Our sweetest songs are those that tell of  
 saddest thought.

Yet if we could scorn  
 Hate, and pride, and fear;  
 If we were things born  
 Not to shed a tear,  
 I know not how thy joy we ever should  
 come near.

Better than all measures  
 Of delightful sound,  
 Better than all treasures  
 That in books are found,  
 Thy skill to poet were, thou scorner of  
 the ground!

Teach me half the gladness  
 That thy brain must know,  
 Such harmonious madness  
 From my lips would flow,  
 The world should listen then, as I am  
 listening now. 1820. 1820.

TO —

I FEAR thy kisses, gentle maiden,  
 Thou needest not fear mine;  
 My spirit is too deeply laden  
 Ever to burthen thine.



I fear thy mien, thy tones, thy motion,  
 Thou needest not fear mine;  
 Innocent is the heart's devotion  
 With which I worship thine.

1820. 1824.

### ARETHUSA

ARETHUSA arose  
 From her couch of snows  
 In the Acroceranlian mountains,—  
 From cloud and from crag,  
 With many a jag,  
 Shepherding her bright fountains.  
 She leapt down the rocks,  
 With her rainbow locks  
 Streaming among the streams;—  
 Her steps paved with green  
 The downward ravine  
 Which slopes to the western gleams:  
 And gliding and springing  
 She went, ever singing,  
 In murmurs as soft as sleep;  
 The Earth seemed to love her,  
 And Heaven smiled above her,  
 As she lingered towards the deep.

Then Alpheus bold,  
 On his glacier cold,  
 With his trident the mountains strook  
 And opened a chasm  
 In the rocks;— with the spasm  
 All Erymanthus shook.  
 And the black south wind  
 It concealed behind  
 The urns of the silent snow,  
 And earthquake and thunder  
 Did rend in sunder  
 The bars of the springs below.  
 The beard and the hair  
 Of the River-god were  
 Seen through the torrent's sweep,  
 As he followed the light  
 Of the fleet nymph's flight  
 To the brink of the Dorian deep.

"Oh, save me! Oh, guide me!  
 And bid the deep hide me,  
 For he grasps me now by the hair!"  
 The loud Ocean heard,  
 To its blue depth stirred,  
 And divided at her prayer;  
 And under the water  
 The Earth's white daughter  
 Fled like a sunny beam;

Behind her descended  
 Her billows, unblended  
 With the brackish Dorian stream:—  
 Like a gloomy stain  
 On the emerald main  
 Alpheus rushed behind,—  
 As an eagle pursuing  
 A dove to its ruin  
 Down the streams of the cloudy wind.

Under the bowers  
 Where the Ocean Powers  
 Sit on their pearlèd thrones,  
 Through the coral woods  
 Of the weltering floods,  
 Over heaps of unvalued stones;  
 Through the dim beams  
 Which amid the streams  
 Weave a network of colored light;  
 And under the caves,  
 Where the shadowy waves  
 Are as green as the forest's night:—  
 Outspeeding the shark,  
 And the sword-fish dark,  
 Under the ocean foam,  
 And up through the rifts  
 Of the mountain cliffs  
 They passed to their Dorian home.

And now from their fountains  
 In Enna's mountains,  
 Down one vale where the morning basks,  
 Like friends once parted  
 Grown single-hearted,  
 They ply their watery tasks.  
 At sunrise they leap  
 From their cradles steep  
 In the cave of the shelving hill;  
 At noontide they flow  
 Through the woods below  
 And the meadows of Asphodel;  
 And at night they sleep  
 In the rocking deep  
 Beneath the Ortygian shore;  
 Like spirits that lie  
 In the azure sky  
 When they love but live no more.

1820. 1824.

### HYMN OF PAN

FROM the forests and highlands  
 We come, we come;  
 From the river-girt islands,  
 Where loud waves are dumb  
 Listening to my sweet pipings.

The wind in the reeds and the rushes,  
 The bees on the bells of thyme,  
 The birds on the myrtle bushes,  
 The cicale above in the lime,  
 And the lizards below in the grass,  
 Were as silent as ever old Tmolus was,  
 Listening to my sweet pipings.

Liquid Peneus was flowing,  
 And all dark Tempe lay  
 In Pelion's shadow, outgrowing  
 The light of the dying day,  
 Speeded by my sweet pipings.  
 The Sileni, and Sylvans, and Fauns,  
 And the Nymphs of the woods and  
 waves,  
 To the edge of the moist river-lawns,  
 And the brink of the dewy caves,  
 And all that did then attend and follow  
 Were silent with love, as you now, Apollo,  
 With envy of my sweet pipings.

I sang of the dancing stars,  
 I sang of the dædal Earth,  
 And of Heaven — and the giant wars,  
 And Love, and Death, and Birth, —  
 And then I changed my pip-  
 ings, —  
 Singing how down the vale of Menalus  
 I pursued a maiden and clasp'd a reed :  
 Gods and men, we are all deluded thus !  
 It breaks in our bosom and then we  
 bleed :  
 All wept, as I think both ye now would,  
 If envy or age had not frozen your blood,  
 At the sorrow of my sweet pipings.  
 1820. 1824.

### THE QUESTION

I DREAMED that, as I wandered by the  
 way,  
 Bare winter suddenly was changed to  
 spring,  
 And gentle odors led my steps astray,  
 Mixed with a sound of waters murmur-  
 ing  
 Along a shelving bank of turf, which  
 lay  
 Under a copse, and hardly dared to  
 fling  
 Its green arms round the bosom of the  
 stream,  
 But kissed it and then fled, as thou might-  
 est in dream.

There grew pied wind-flowers and violets,  
 Daisies, those pearly Arcturi of the  
 earth,  
 The constellated flower that never sets ;  
 Faint oxslips ; tender bluebells, at  
 whose birth  
 The sod scarce heaved ; and that tall  
 flower that wets —  
 Like a child, half in tenderness and  
 mirth —  
 Its mother's face with heaven's collected  
 tears,  
 When the low wind, its playmate's voice,  
 it hears.

And in the warm hedge grew lush eglan-  
 tine,  
 Green cowbind and the moonlight-  
 colored May,  
 And cherry-blossoms, and white cups,  
 whose wine  
 Was the bright dew, yet drained not by  
 the day ;  
 And wild roses, and ivy serpentine,  
 With its dark buds and leaves, wander-  
 ing astray ;  
 And flowers azure, black, and streaked  
 with gold,  
 Fairer than any wakened eyes behold.

And nearer to the river's trembling edge  
 There grew broad flag-flowers, purple  
 pranked with white,  
 And starry river buds among the sedge,  
 And floating water-lilies, broad and  
 bright,  
 Which lit the oak that overhung the hedge  
 With moonlight beams of their own  
 watery light ;  
 And bulrushes, and reeds of such deep  
 green  
 As soothed the dazzled eye with sober  
 sheen.

Methought that of these visionary flowers  
 I made a nosegay, bound in such a way  
 That the same hues, which in their nat-  
 ural bowers  
 Were mingled or opposed, the like array  
 Kept these imprisoned children of the  
 Hours  
 Within my hand, — and then, elate  
 and gay,  
 I hastened to the spot whence I had come,  
 That I might there present it ! — oh ! to  
 whom ?  
 1820. 1822.

## SONG

RARELY, rarely, comest thou,  
 Spirit of Delight!  
 Wherefore hast thou left me now  
 Many a day and night?  
 Many a weary night and day  
 'Tis since thou art fled away.

How shall ever one like me  
 Win thee back again?  
 With the joyous and the free  
 Thou wilt scoff at pain.  
 Spirit false! thou hast forgot  
 All but those who need thee not.

As a lizard with the shade  
 Of a trembling leaf,  
 Thou with sorrow art dismayed;  
 Even the sighs of grief  
 Reproach thee, that thou art not near,  
 And reproach thou wilt not hear.

Let me set my mournful ditty  
 To a merry measure,  
 Thou wilt never come for pity,  
 Thou wilt come for pleasure,  
 Pity then will cut away  
 Those cruel wings, and thou wilt stay

I love all that thou lovest,  
 Spirit of Delight!  
 The fresh Earth in new leaves drest,  
 And the starry night;  
 Autumn evening, and the morn  
 When the golden mists are born.

I love snow, and all the forms  
 Of the radiant frost;  
 I love waves, and winds, and storms,  
 Every thing almost  
 Which is Nature's, and may be  
 Untainted by man's misery.

I love tranquil solitude,  
 And such society  
 As is quiet, wise, and good;  
 Between thee and me  
 What difference? but thou dost possess  
 The things I seek, not love them less.

I love Love — though he has wings,  
 And like light can flee,  
 But above all other things,  
 Spirit, I love thee —

Thou art love and life! Oh come,  
 Make once more my heart thy home.  
 1820.<sup>1</sup> 1824.

## TO THE MOON

ART thou pale for weariness  
 Of climbing heaven and gazing on the  
 earth,  
 Wandering companionless  
 Among the stars that have a different  
 birth, —  
 And ever changing, like a joyless eye  
 That finds no object worth its constancy?  
 1820. 1824.

## THE WORLD'S WANDERERS

TELL me, thou star, whose wings of light  
 Speed thee in thy fiery flight,  
 In what cavern of the night  
 Will thy pinions close now?

Tell me, moon, thou pale and gray  
 Pilgrim of heaven's homeless way,  
 In what depth of night or day  
 Seekest thou repose now?

Weary wind, who wanderest  
 Like the world's rejected guest,  
 Hast thou still some secret nest  
 On the tree or billow?  
 1820. 1824.

## TIME LONG PAST

LIKE the ghost of a dear friend dead  
 Is Time long past.  
 A tone which is now forever fled,  
 A hope which is now forever past,  
 A love so sweet it could not last,  
 Was Time long past.

There were sweet dreams in the night  
 Of Time long past:  
 And, was it sadness or delight,  
 Each day a shadow onward cast  
 Which made us wish it yet might last —  
 That Time long past.

<sup>1</sup> Though included by Mrs. Shelley, and by later editors, among the poems of 1821, there is a copy of this poem in the Harvard College Manuscripts, dated in Shelley's handwriting, "Pisa, May 1820."<sup>21</sup> See note in Edward Dowden's edition of Shelley.



Young Love should teach Time, in his  
 own gray style,  
 All that thou art. Art thou not void of  
 guile,  
 A lovely soul formed to be blest and bless?  
 A well of sealed and secret happiness,  
 Whose waters like blithe light and music  
 are,  
 Vanquishing dissonance and gloom? A  
 Star  
 Which moves not in the moving Heavens,  
 alone?  
 A smile amid dark frowns? a gentle tone  
 Amid rude voices? a beloved light?  
 A Solitude, a Refuge, a Delight?  
 A Lute which those whom Love has  
 taught to play  
 Make music on, to soothe the roughest day  
 And lull fond grief asleep? a buried  
 treasure?  
 A cradle of young thoughts of wingless  
 pleasure;  
 A violet-shrouded grave of Woe? — I  
 measure  
 The world of fancies, seeking one like  
 thee,  
 And find — alas! mine own infirmity.

She met me, Stranger, upon life's rough  
 way,  
 And lured me towards sweet Death; as  
 Night by Day,  
 Winter by Spring, or Sorrow by swift  
 Hope,  
 Led into light, life, peace. An antelope,  
 In the suspended impulse of its lightness,  
 Were less ethereally light: the brightness  
 Of her divinest presence trembles through  
 Her limbs, as underneath a cloud of dew  
 Embodied in the windless Heaven of June  
 Amid the splendor-wingèd stars, the  
 Moon  
 Burns, inextinguishably beautiful:  
 And from her lips, as from a hyacinth full  
 Of honey-dew, a liquid murmur drops,  
 Killing the sense with passion; sweet as  
 stops  
 Of planetary music heard in trance.  
 In her mild lights the starry spirits dance,  
 The sunbeams of those wells which ever  
 leap  
 Under the lightnings of the soul — too  
 deep  
 For the brief fathom-line of thought or  
 sense.  
 The glory of her being, issuing thence,

Stains the dead, blank, cold air with a  
 warm shade  
 Of unentangled intermixture, made  
 By Love, of light and motion: one in-  
 tense  
 Diffusion, one serene Omnipresence,  
 Whose flowing outlines mingle in their  
 flowing  
 Around her cheeks and utmost fingers  
 glowing  
 With the unintermitted blood, which  
 there  
 Quivers (as in a fleece of snow-like air  
 The crimson pulse of living morning  
 quiver),  
 Continuously prolonged, and ending  
 never,  
 Till they are lost, and in that Beauty  
 furled  
 Which penetrates and clasps and fills the  
 world;  
 Scarce visible from extreme loveliness.  
 Warm fragrance seems to fall from her  
 light dress  
 And her loose hair; and where some  
 heavy tress  
 The air of her own speed has disentwined,  
 The sweetness seems to satiate the faint  
 wind;  
 And in the soul a wild odor is felt,  
 Beyond the sense, like fiery dews that melt  
 Into the bosom of a frozen bud. —  
 See where she stands! a mortal shape  
 indued  
 With love and life and light and deity,  
 And motion which may change but can-  
 not die;  
 An image of some bright Eternity;  
 A shadow of some golden dream; a  
 Splendor  
 Leaving the third sphere pilotless; a  
 tender  
 Reflection of the eternal Moon of Love  
 Under whose motions life's dull billows  
 move;  
 A Metaphor of Spring and Youth and  
 Morning;  
 A Vision like incarnate April, warning,  
 With smiles and tears, Frost the An-  
 atomy  
 Into his summer grave.

Ah, woe is me!

What have I dared? where am I lifted?  
 how  
 Shall I descend, and perish not? I know



That Love makes all things equal: I  
have heard  
By mine own heart this joyous truth  
averred:  
The spirit of the worm beneath the sod  
In love and worship, blends itself with  
God.

Spouse! Sister! Angel! Pilot of the  
Fate  
Whose course has been so starless! Oh,  
too late  
Belovèd! Oh, too soon adored, by me!  
For in the fields of immortality  
My spirit should at first have worshipped  
thine,  
A divine presence in a place divine;  
Or should have moved beside it on this  
earth,  
A shadow of that substance, from its  
birth;  
But not as now:—I love thee; yes, I  
feel  
That on the fountain of my heart a seal  
Is set, to keep its waters pure and bright  
For thee, since in those *tears* thou hast  
delight.  
We—are we not formed, as notes of  
music are,  
For one another, though dissimilar;  
Such difference without discord, as can  
make  
Those sweetest sounds, in which all spirits  
shake  
As trembling leaves in a continuous air?

Thy wisdom speaks in me, and bids  
me dare  
Beacon the rocks on which high hearts are  
wrecked.  
I never was attached to that great sect,  
Whose doctrine is, that each one should  
select  
Out of the crowd a mistress or a friend,  
And all the rest, though fair and wise,  
commend  
To cold oblivion, though it is in the code  
Of modern morals, and the beaten road  
Which those poor slaves with weary  
footsteps tread,  
Who travel to their home among the  
dead  
By the broad highway of the world, and so  
With one chained friend, perhaps a jealous  
foe,  
The dreariest and the longest journey go.

True Love in this differs from gold and  
clay  
That to divide is not to take away.  
Love is like understanding, that grows  
bright,  
Gazing on many truths; 'tis like thy  
light,  
Imagination! which from earth and sky,  
And from the depths of human phantasy,  
As from a thousand prisms and mirrors,  
fills  
The Universe with glorious beams, and  
kills  
Error, the worm, with many a sun-like  
arrow  
Of its reverberated lightning. Narrow  
The heart that loves, the brain that con-  
templates,  
The life that wears, the spirit that creates  
One object, and one form, and builds  
thereby  
A sepulchre for its eternity.

Mind from its object differs most in  
this:  
Evil from good; misery from happiness;  
The baser from the nobler; the impure  
And frail, from what is clear and must  
endure.  
If you divide suffering and dross, you may  
Diminish till it is consumed away;  
If you divide pleasure and love and  
thought,  
Each part exceeds the whole; and we  
know not  
How much, while any yet remains un-  
shared,  
Of pleasure may be gained, of sorrow  
spared:  
This truth is that deep well, whence sages  
draw  
The unenvied light of hope; the eternal  
law  
By which those live, to whom this world  
of life  
Is as a garden ravaged, and whose strife  
Tills for the promise of a later birth  
The wilderness of this Elysian earth.

There was a Being whom my spirit oft  
Met on its visioned wanderings, far aloft,  
In the clear golden prime of my youth's  
dawn.  
Upon the fairy isles of sunny lawn,  
Amid the enchanted mountains, and the  
caves

Of divine sleep, and on the air-like waves  
 Of wonder-level dream, whose tremulous  
 floor  
 Paved her light steps; — on an imagined  
 shore,  
 Under the gray beak of some promontory  
 She met me, robed in such exceeding  
 glory,  
 That I beheld her not. In solitudes  
 Her voice came to me through the whisper-  
 ing woods,  
 And from the fountains, and the odors  
 deep  
 Of flowers, which, like lips murmuring in  
 their sleep  
 Of the sweet kisses which had lulled them  
 there,  
 Breathed but of *her* to the enamored air;  
 And from the breezes whether low or  
 loud,  
 And from the rain of every passing cloud,  
 And from the singing of the summer birds,  
 And from all sounds, all silence. In the  
 words  
 Of antique verse and high romance, — in  
 form,  
 Sound, color — in whatever checks that  
 Storm  
 Which with the shattered present chokes  
 the past;  
 And in that best philosophy, whose taste  
 Makes this cold common hell, our life, a  
 doom  
 As glorious as a fiery martyrdom;  
 Her Spirit was the harmony of truth. —

Then, from the caverns of my dreamy  
 youth  
 I sprang, as one sandalled with plumes of  
 fire,  
 And towards the loadstar of my one  
 desire,  
 I flitted, like a dizzy moth, whose flight  
 Is as a dead leaf's in the owl light,  
 When it would seek in Hesper's setting  
 sphere  
 A radiant death, a fiery sepulchre,  
 As if it were a lamp of earthly flame. —  
 But She, whom prayers or tears then  
 could not tame,  
 Passed, like a God throned on a wingèd  
 planet,  
 Whose burning plumes to tenfold swift-  
 ness fan it,  
 Into the dreary cone of our life's shade;  
 And as a man with mighty loss dismayed,

I would have followed, though the grave  
 between  
 Yawned like a gulf whose spectres are  
 unseen:  
 When a voice said: — "O Thou of hearts  
 the weakest,  
 The phantom is beside thee whom thou  
 seekest."  
 Then I — "Where?" the world's echo  
 answered "where!"  
 And in that silence, and in my despair,  
 I questioned every tongueless wind that  
 flew  
 Over my tower of mourning, if it knew  
 Whither 'twas fled, this soul out of my  
 soul;  
 And murmured names and spells which  
 have control  
 Over the sightless tyrants of our fate;  
 But neither prayer nor verse could dis-  
 sipate  
 The night which closed on her; nor  
 uncreate  
 That world within this Chaos, mine and  
 me,  
 Of which she was the veiled Divinity,  
 The world I say of thoughts that wor-  
 shipped her:  
 And therefore I went forth, with hope  
 and fear  
 And every gentle passion sick to death,  
 Feeding my course with expectation's  
 breath,  
 Into the wintry forest of our life;  
 And struggling through its error with vain  
 strife,  
 And stumbling in my weakness and my  
 haste,  
 And half bewildered by new forms, I past  
 Seeking among those untaught foresters  
 If I could find one form resembling hers,  
 In which she might have masked herself  
 from me.  
 There, — One, whose voice was venomed  
 melody  
 Sate by a well, under blue nightshade  
 bowers;  
 The breath of her false mouth was like  
 faint flowers,  
 Her touch was as electric poison, — flame  
 Out of her looks into my vitals came,  
 And from her living cheeks and bosom  
 flew  
 A killing air, which pierced like honey-dew  
 Into the core of my green heart, and lay  
 Upon its leaves; until, as hair grown gray

O'er a young brow, they hid its unblown  
prime  
With ruins of unseasonable time.

In many mortal forms I rashly sought  
The shadow of that idol of my thought.  
And some were fair—but beauty dies  
away:

Others were wise—but honeyed words  
betray:  
And One was true—oh! why not true  
to me?

Then, as a hunted deer that could not flee,  
I turned upon my thoughts, and stood  
at bay,  
Wounded and weak and panting; the  
cold day

Trembled, for pity of my strife and pain.  
When, like a noonday dawn, there shone  
again

Deliverance. One stood on my path who  
seemed

As like the glorious shape which I had  
dreamed,

As is the Moon, whose changes ever run  
Into themselves, to the eternal Sun;

The cold chaste Moon, the Queen of  
Heaven's bright isles,

Who makes all beautiful on which she  
smiles,

That wandering shrine of soft yet icy  
flame

Which ever is transformed, yet still the  
same,

And warms not but illumines. Young  
and fair

As the descended Spirit of that sphere,  
She hid me, as the Moon may hide the  
night

From its own darkness, until all was  
bright

Between the Heaven and Earth of my  
calm mind,

And, as a cloud charioted by the wind,  
She led me to a cave in that wild place,  
And sate beside me, with her downward  
face

Illumining my slumbers, like the Moon  
Waxing and waning o'er Endymion.

And I was laid asleep, spirit and limb,  
And all my being became bright or dim  
As the Moon's image in a summer sea,  
According as she smiled or frowned on  
me;

And there I lay, within a chaste cold bed:  
Alas, I then was nor alive nor dead;—

For at her silver voice came Death and  
Life,

Unmindful each of their accustomed strife,  
Masked like twin babes, a sister and a  
brother,

The wandering hopes of one abandoned  
mother,

And through the cavern without wings  
they flew,

And cried "Away, he is not of our crew."  
I wept, and though it be a dream, I weep.

What storms then shook the ocean of  
my sleep,

Blotting that Moon, whose pale and  
waning lips

Then shrank as in the sickness of  
eclipse;—

And how my soul was as a lampless sea,  
And who was then its Tempest; and  
when She,

The Planet of that hour, was quenched,  
what frost

Crept o'er those waters, till from coast  
to coast

The moving billows of my being fell  
Into a death of ice, immovable;—

And then—what earthquakes made it  
gape and split,

The white Moon smiling all the while on  
it,

These words conceal:—If not, each word  
would be

The key of stanchless tears. Weep not  
for me!

At length, into the obscure Forest came  
The Vision I had sought through grief and  
shame.

Athwart that wintry wilderness of thorns  
Flashed from her motion splendor like the  
Morn's

And from her presence life was radiated  
Through the gray earth and branches  
bare and dead;

So that her way was paved, and roofed  
above

With flowers as soft as thoughts of bud-  
ding love;

And music from her respiration spread  
Like light,—all other sounds were pene-  
trated

By the small, still, sweet spirit of that  
sound,

So that the savage winds hung mute  
around;

And odors warm and fresh fell from her  
hair,

Dissolving the dull cold in the frore air :  
Soft as an Incarnation of the Sun,  
When light is changed to love, this glorious  
One

Floated into the cavern where I lay,  
And called my Spirit, and the dreaming  
clay

Was lifted by the thing that dreamed  
below

As smoke by fire, and in her beauty's glow  
I stood, and felt the dawn of my long  
night

Was penetrating me with living light :  
I knew it was the Vision veiled from me  
So many years — that it was Emily.

Twin Spheres of light who rule this  
passive Earth,  
This world of love, this *me*; and into  
birth

Awaken all its fruits and flowers, and dart  
Magnetic might into its central heart ;  
And lift its billows and its mists, and  
guide

By everlasting laws, each wind and tide  
To its fit cloud, and its appointed cave ;  
And lull its storms, each in the craggy  
grave

Which was its cradle, luring to faint  
bowers

The armies of the rainbow-wingèd  
showers ;

And, as those married lights, which from  
the towers

Of Heaven look forth and fold the wan-  
dering globe

In liquid sleep and splendor, as a robe ;  
And all their many-mingled influence  
blend,

If equal, yet unlike, to one sweet end ; —  
So ye, bright regents, with alternate  
sway

Govern my sphere of being, night and  
day !

Thou, not disdaining even a borrowed  
might :

Thou, not eclipsing a remoter light ;  
And, through the shadow of the seasons  
three,

From Spring to Autumn's sere maturity,  
Light it into the Winter of the tomb,  
Where it may ripen to a brighter bloom.  
Thou too, O Comet beautiful and fierce,  
Who drew the heart of this frail Universe

Towards thine own ; till, wrecked in that  
convulsion,

Alternating attraction and repulsion,  
Thine went astray and that was rent in  
twain ;

Oh, float into our azure heaven again !

Be there love's folding-star at thy return ;  
The living Sun will feed thee from its urn  
Of golden fire ; the Moon will veil her  
horn

In thy last smiles ; adoring Even and  
Morn

Will worship thee with incense of calm  
breath

And lights and shadows ; as the star of  
Death

And Birth is worshipped by those sisters  
wild

Called Hope and Fear — upon the heart  
are piled

Their offerings, — of this sacrifice divine  
A world shall be the altar.

Lady mine,  
Scorn not these flowers of thought, the  
fading birth

Which from its heart of hearts that plant  
puts forth

Whose fruit, made perfect by thy sunny  
eyes,

Will be as of the trees of Paradise.

The day is come, and thou wilt fly  
with me.

To whatsoever of dull mortality  
Is mine, remain a vestal sister still ;  
To the intense, the deep, the imperishable,  
Not mine but me, henceforth be thou  
united

Even as a bride, delighting and delighted.  
The hour is come : — the destined Star  
has risen

Which shall descend upon a vacant prison.  
The walls are high, the gates are strong,  
thick set

The sentinels — but true love never yet  
Was thus constrained : it overleaps all  
fence :

Like lightning, with invisible violence  
Piercing its continents ; like Heaven's  
free breath,

Which he who grasps can hold not ; liker  
Death,

Who rides upon a thought, and makes his  
way

Through temple, tower, and palace, and  
the array

Of arms; more strength has Love than he  
or they;  
For it can burst his charnel, and make free  
The limbs in chains, the heart in agony,  
The soul in dust and chaos.

Emily,

A ship is floating in the harbor now,  
A wind is hovering o'er the mountain's  
brow;

There is a path on the sea's azure floor,  
No keel has ever ploughed that path  
before;

The halcyons brood around the foamless  
isles;

The treacherous Ocean has forsworn its  
wiles;

The merry mariners are bold and free:  
Say, my heart's sister, wilt thou sail with  
me?

Our bark is as an albatross, whose nest  
Is a far Eden of the purple East;  
And we between her wings will sit, while  
Night

And Day, and Storm, and Calm, pursue  
their flight,

Our ministers, along the boundless Sea,  
Treading each other's heels, unheededly.

It is an Isle under Ionian skies,  
Beautiful as a wreck of Paradise,  
And, for the harbors are not safe and good,  
This land would have remained a solitude  
But for some pastoral people native there,  
Who from the Elysian, clear, and golden  
air

Draw the last spirit of the age of gold,  
Simple and spirited; innocent and bold.  
The blue Ægean girds this chosen home,  
With ever-changing sound and light and  
foam,

Kissing the sifted sands, and caverns hoar;  
And all the winds wandering along the  
shore

Undulate with the undulating tide:  
There are thick woods where sylvan forms  
abide;

And many a fountain, rivulet, and pond,  
As clear as elemental diamond,  
Or serene morning air; and far beyond,  
The mossy tracks made by the goats and  
deer

(Which the rough shepherd treads but  
once a year),

Pierce into glades, caverns, and bowers,  
and halls

Built round with ivy, which the water-  
falls

Illumining, with sound that never fails  
Accompany the noonday nightingales;  
And all the place is peopled with sweet  
airs;

The light clear element which the isle  
wears

Is heavy with the scent of lemon-flowers,  
Which floats like mist laden with unseen  
showers

And falls upon the eyelids like faint sleep;  
And from the moss violets and jonquils  
peep,

And dart their arrowy odor through the  
brain

Till you might faint with that delicious  
pain,

And every motion, odor, beam, and tone  
With that deep music is in unison:

Which is a soul within the soul — they  
seem

Like echoes of an antenatal dream. —  
It is an isle 'twixt Heaven, Air, Earth,  
and Sea,

Cradled, and hung in clear tranquillity;  
Bright as that wandering Eden Lucifer,  
Washed by the soft blue Oceans of young  
air.

It is a favored place. Famine or Blight,  
Pestilence, War, and Earthquake, never  
light

Upon its mountain-peaks; blind vultures,  
they

Sail onward far upon their fatal way:  
The winged storms, chanting their thun-  
der-psalm

To other lands, leave azure chasms of  
calm

Over this isle, or weep themselves in dew,  
From which its fields and woods ever  
renew

Their green and golden immortality.

And from the sea there rise, and from the  
sky

There fall, clear exhalations, soft and  
bright,

Veil after veil, each hiding some delight,  
Which Sun or Moon or zephyr draw aside,  
Till the isle's beauty, like a naked bride  
Glowing at once with love and loveliness,  
Blushes and trembles at its own excess:  
Yet, like a buried lamp, a Soul no less  
Burns in the heart of this delicious isle,  
An atom of th' Eternal, whose own smile  
Unfolds itself, and may be felt, not seen  
O'er the gray rocks, blue waves, and  
forests green,



Filling their bare and void interstices. —  
 But the chief marvel of the wilderness  
 Is a lone dwelling, built by whom or how  
 None of the rustic island-people know;  
 'Tis not a tower of strength, though with  
 its height

It overtops the woods; but, for delight,  
 Some wise and tender Ocean-King, ere  
 crime

Had been invented, in the world's young  
 prime,

Reared it, a wonder of that simple time,  
 An envy of the isles, a pleasure-house  
 Made sacred to his sister and his spouse.  
 It scarce seems now a wreck of human art,  
 But, as it were Titanic; in the heart  
 Of Earth having assumed its form, then  
 grown

Out of the mountains, from the living  
 stone,

Lifting itself in caverns light and high!  
 For all the antique and learned imagery  
 Has been erased, and in the place of it  
 The ivy and the wild-vine interknit  
 The volumes of their many twining  
 stems;

Parasite flowers illumine with dewy gems  
 The lampless halls, and when they fade,  
 the sky

Peeps through their winter-woof of  
 tracery

With Moonlight patches, or star atoms  
 keen,

Or fragments of the day's intense  
 serene; —

Working mosaic on their Parian floors.  
 And, day and night, aloof, from the high  
 towers

And terraces, the Earth and Ocean seem  
 To sleep in one another's arms, and dream  
 Of waves, flowers, clouds, woods, rocks,  
 and all that we

Read in their smiles, and call reality.

This isle and house are mine, and I  
 have vowed

Thee to be lady of the solitude. —  
 And I have fitted up some chambers there  
 Looking towards the golden Eastern air,  
 And level with the living winds, which flow  
 Like waves above the living waves  
 below. —

I have sent books and music there, and  
 all

Those instruments with which high spirits  
 call

The future from its cradle, and the past  
 Out of its grave, and make the present  
 last

In thoughts and joys which sleep, but  
 cannot die,

Folded within their own eternity.

Our simple life wants little, and true taste  
 Hires not the pale drudge Luxury, to  
 waste

The scene it would adorn, and therefore  
 still,

Nature with all her children, haunts the  
 hill.

The ring-dove, in the embowering ivy,  
 yet

Keeps up her love-lament, and the owls  
 flit

Round the evening tower, and the young  
 stars glance

Between the quick bats in their twilight  
 dance;

The spotted deer bask in the fresh moon-  
 light

Before our gate, and the slow, silent night  
 Is measured by the pants of their calm  
 sleep.

Be this our home in life, and when years  
 heap

Their withered hours, like leaves, on our  
 decay,

Let us become the overhanging day,  
 The living soul of this Elysian isle,  
 Conscious, inseparable, one. Meanwhile  
 We two will rise, and sit, and walk to-  
 gether,

Under the roof of blue Ionian weather,  
 And wander in the meadows, or ascend  
 The mossy mountains, where the blue  
 heavens bend

With lightest winds, to touch their para-  
 mour;

Or linger, where the pebble-paven shore,  
 Under the quick, faint kisses of the sea  
 Trembles and sparkles as with ecstasy, —  
 Possessing and posset by all that is  
 Within that calm circumference of bliss,  
 And by each other, till to love and live  
 Be one: — or, at the noontide hour, arrive  
 Where some old cavern hoar seems yet to  
 keep

The moonlight of the expired night asleep,  
 Through which the awakened day can  
 never peep;

A veil for our seclusion, close as Night's,  
 Where secure sleep may kill thine inno-  
 cent lights;

Sleep, the fresh dew of languid love, the  
 rain  
 Whose drops quench kisses till they burn  
 again.  
 And we will talk, until thought's melody  
 Become too sweet for utterance, and it  
 die  
 In words, to live again in looks, which  
 dart  
 With thrilling tone into the voiceless  
 heart,  
 Harmonizing silence without a sound.  
 Our breath shall intermix, our bosoms  
 bound,  
 And our veins beat together; and our  
 lips  
 With other eloquence than words, eclipse  
 The soul that burns between them, and  
 the wells  
 Which boil under our being's inmost cells,  
 The fountains of our deepest life, shall be  
 Confused in passion's golden purity,  
 As mountain-springs under the morning  
 Sun.  
 We shall become the same, we shall be  
 one  
 Spirit within two frames, oh! wherefore  
 two?  
 One passion in twin-hearts, which grows  
 and grew,  
 Till like two meteors of expanding flame,  
 Those spheres instinct with it become the  
 same,  
 Touch, mingle, are transfigured; ever  
 still  
 Burning, yet ever inconsumable:  
 In one another's substance finding food,  
 Like flames too pure and light and unim-  
 bued  
 To nourish their bright lives with baser  
 prey,  
 Which point to Heaven and cannot pass  
 away:  
 One hope within two wills, one will be-  
 neath  
 Two overshadowing minds, one life, one  
 death,  
 One Heaven, one Hell, one immortality,  
 And one annihilation. Woe is me!  
 The winged words on which my soul  
 would pierce  
 Into the height of love's rare Universe,  
 Are chains of lead around its flight of  
 fire—  
 I pant, I sink, I tremble, I expire!

Weak Verses, go, kneel at your Sover-  
 eign's feet,  
 And say:—"We are the masters of thy  
 slave;  
 What wouldst thou with us and ours  
 and thine?"  
 Then call your sisters from Oblivion's  
 cave,  
 All singing loud: "Love's very pain is  
 sweet,  
 But its reward is in the world divine  
 Which, if not here, it builds beyond the  
 grave."  
 So shall ye live when I am there. Then  
 haste  
 Over the hearts of men, until ye meet  
 Marina, Vanna, Primus, and the rest,  
 And bid them love each other and be  
 blest;  
 And leave the troop which errs, and which  
 reproves,  
 And come and be my guest,—for I am  
 Love's. 1821. 1821.

#### TO NIGHT

SWIFTLY walk o'er the western wave,  
 Spirit of Night!  
 Out of thy misty eastern cave,  
 Where all the long and lone daylight,  
 Thou wovest dreams of joy and fear,  
 Which make thee terrible and dear,—  
 Swift be thy flight!

Wrap thy form in a mantle gray,  
 Star-inwrought!  
 Blind with thine hair the eyes of Day;  
 Kiss her until she be wearied out,  
 Then wander o'er city, and sea, and land,  
 Touching all with thine opiate wand—  
 Come, long sought!

When I arose and saw the dawn,  
 I sighed for thee;  
 When light rode high, and the dew was  
 gone,  
 And noon lay heavy on flower and tree,  
 And the weary Day turned to his rest,  
 Lingered like an unloved guest,  
 I sighed for thee.

Thy brother Death came, and cried,  
 Wouldst thou me?  
 Thy sweet child Sleep, the filmy-eyed,  
 Murmured like a noontide bee,

Shall I nestle near thy side?  
 Wouldst thou me? — And I replied,  
 No, not thee!

Death will come when thou art dead,  
 Soon, too soon —  
 Sleep will come when thou art fled;  
 Of neither would I ask the boon  
 I ask of thee, belovèd Night —  
 Swift be thine approaching flight,  
 Come soon, soon!

1821. 1824.

### TIME

UNFATHOMABLE Sea! whose waves are  
 years,  
 Ocean of Time, whose waters of deep  
 woe  
 Are brackish with the salt of human  
 tears!  
 Thou shoreless flood, which in thy  
 ebb and flow  
 Claspest the limits of mortality!  
 And sick of prey, yet howling on for  
 more,  
 Vomitest thy wrecks on its inhospitable  
 shore;  
 Treacherous in calm, and terrible in  
 storm,  
 Who shall put forth on thee,  
 Unfathomable Sea? 1821. 1824.

### SONNET: POLITICAL GREATNESS

NOR happiness, nor majesty, nor fame,  
 Nor peace, nor strength, nor skill in arms  
 or arts,  
 Shepherd those herds whom tyranny  
 makes tame;  
 Verse echoes not one beating of their  
 hearts,  
 History is but the shadow of their shame,  
 Art veils her glass, or from the pageant  
 starts  
 As to oblivion their blind millions fleet,  
 Staining that Heaven with obscene  
 imagery  
 Of their own likeness. What are numbers  
 knit  
 By force or custom? Man, who man  
 would be,  
 Must rule the empire of himself; in it  
 Must be supreme, establishing his throne  
 On vanquished will, quelling the anarchy  
 Of hopes and fears, being himself alone.

1821. 1824.

### MUTABILITY

THE flower that smiles to-day  
 To-morrow dies;  
 All that we wish to stay  
 Tempts and then flies.  
 What is this world's delight?  
 Lightning that mocks the night,  
 Brief even as bright.

Virtue, how frail it is!  
 Friendship how rare!  
 Love, how it sells poor bliss  
 For proud despair!  
 But we, though soon they fall,  
 Survive their joy, and all  
 Which ours we call.

Whilst skies are blue and bright,  
 Whilst flowers are gay,  
 Whilst eyes that change ere night  
 Make glad the day;  
 Whilst yet the calm hours creep,  
 Dream thou — and from thy sleep  
 Then wake to weep.

1821. 1824.

### A LAMENT

O WORLD! O life! O time!  
 On whose last steps I climb  
 Trembling at that where I had stood  
 before;  
 When will return the glory of your prime?  
 No more — Oh, never more!  
 Out of the day and night  
 A joy has taken flight;  
 Fresh spring, and summer, and winter  
 hoar,  
 Move my faint heart with grief, but with  
 delight  
 No more — Oh, never more!

1821. 1824.

### TO —

MUSIC, when soft voices die,  
 Vibrates in the memory —  
 Odors, when sweet violets sicken,  
 Live within the sense they quicken,  
 Rose leaves, when the rose is dead,  
 Are heaped for the belovèd's bed;  
 And so thy thoughts, when thou art gone  
 Love itself shall slumber on.

1821. 1824.

## ADONAI8

AN ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF JOHN KEATS,  
AUTHOR OF ENDYMION, HYPERION, ETC.

*Ἄστηρ πρὶν μὲν ἔλαμπες ἐνὶ ζωοῖσιν Ἐῷος·  
Νῦν δὲ θανῶν λάμπεις Ἐσπερος ἐν φθιμέ-  
νοισι.*

PLATO

I weep for Adonais — he is dead!  
Oh weep for Adonais! though our tears  
Thaw not the frost which binds so dear a  
head!  
And thou, sad Hour, selected from all  
years  
To mourn our loss, rouse thy obscure  
compeers,  
And teach them thine own sorrow! Say:  
"With me  
Died Adonais; till the Future dares  
Forget the Past, his fate and fame shall be  
An echo and a light unto eternity!"

Where wert thou, mighty Mother, when  
he lay,  
When thy Son lay, pierced by the shaft  
which flies  
In darkness? where was lorn Urania  
When Adonais died? With veiled eyes,  
'Mid listening Echoes, in her Paradise  
She sate, while one, with soft enamored  
breath,  
Rekindled all the fading melodies  
With which, like flowers that mock the  
corse beneath,  
He had adorned and hid the coming bulk  
of death.

Oh weep for Adonais — he is dead!  
Wake, melancholy Mother, wake and  
weep!  
Yet wherefore? Quench within their  
burning bed  
Thy fiery tears, and let thy lov'd heart  
keep,  
Like his, a mute and uncomplaining  
sleep;  
For he is gone, where all things wise and  
fair  
Descend; — oh, dream not that the am-  
orous Deep  
Will yet restore him to the vital air;  
Death feeds on his mute voice, and laughs  
at our despair.

Most musical of mourners, weep again  
Lament anew, Urania! — He died,  
Who was the Sire of an immortal strain,  
Blind, old, and lonely, when his country's  
pride,  
The priest, the slave, and the liberticide,  
Trampled and mocked with many a  
loathèd rite  
Of lust and blood; he went, unterrified,  
Into the gulf of death; but his clear  
Sprite  
Yet reigns o'er earth; the third among  
The sons of light.

Most musical of mourners, weep anew!  
Not all to that bright station dared to  
climb;  
And happier they their happiness who  
knew,  
Whose tapers yet burn through that night  
of time  
In which suns perished; others more  
sublime,  
Struck by the envious wrath of man or  
God,  
Have sunk, extinct in their refulgent  
prime;  
And some yet live, treading the thorny  
road,  
Which leads, through toil and hate, to  
Fame's serene abode.

But now, thy youngest, dearest one has  
perished,  
The nursling of thy widowhood, who  
grew,  
Like a pale flower by some sad maiden  
cherished,  
And fed with true love tears, instead of  
dew;  
Most musical of mourners, weep anew!  
Thy extreme hope, the loveliest and the  
last,  
The bloom, whose petals nipt before they  
blew  
Died on the promise of the fruit, is waste;  
The broken lily lies — the storm is over-  
past.

To that high Capital, where kingly Death  
Keeps his pale court in beauty and  
decay,  
He came; and bought, with price of pur-  
est breath,  
A grave among the eternal. — Come  
away!

Haste, while the vault of blue Italian day  
 's yet his fitting charnel-roof! while still  
 He lies, as if in dewy sleep he lay;  
 Awake him not! surely he takes his fill  
 Of deep and liquid rest, forgetful of all ill.

He will awake no more, oh, never  
 more!—

Within the twilight chamber spreads  
 apace,

The shadow of white Death, and at the  
 door

Invisible Corruption waits to trace  
 His extreme way to her dim dwelling-  
 place;

The eternal Hunger sits, but pity and awe  
 Soothe her pale rage, nor dares she to  
 deface

So fair a prey, till darkness, and the law  
 Of change shall o'er his sleep the mortal  
 curtain draw.

Oh weep for Adonais!—The quick  
 Dreams,

The passion-wingèd Ministers of thought,  
 Who were his flocks, whom near the living  
 streams

Of his young spirit he fed, and whom he  
 taught

The love which was its music, wander  
 not,—

Wander no more, from kindling brain to  
 brain,

But droop there, whence they sprung;  
 and mourn their lot

Round the cold heart, where, after their  
 sweet pain,

They ne'er will gather strength, or find a  
 home again.

And one with trembling hands clasps  
 his cold head,

And fans him with her moonlight wings,  
 and cries;

“Our love, our hope, our sorrow, is not  
 dead;

See, on the silken fringe of his faint eyes,  
 Like dew upon a sleeping flower, there  
 lies

A tear whose Dream has loosened from his  
 brain.”

Lost Angel of a ruined Paradise!

She knew not 'twas her own; as with no  
 stain

She faded, like a cloud which had outwept  
 its rain.

One from a lucid urn of starry dew  
 Washed his light limbs as if embalming  
 them;

Another clipt her profuse locks, and threw  
 The wreath upon him, like an anadem,  
 Which frozen tears instead of pearls  
 begem;

Another in her wilful grief would break  
 Her bow and wingèd reeds, as if to stem  
 A greater loss with one which was more  
 weak;

And dull the barbèd fire against his frozen  
 cheek.

Another Splendor on his mouth alit,  
 That mouth, whence it was wont to draw  
 the breath

Which gave it strength to pierce the  
 guarded wit,

And pass into the panting heart beneath  
 With lightning and with music: the damp  
 death

Quenched its caress upon his icy lips;  
 And, as a dying meteor stains a wreath  
 Of moonlight vapor, which the cold night  
 clips,

It flushed through his pale limbs, and  
 passed to its eclipse.

And others came . . . Desires and Ado-  
 rations,

Wingèd Persuasions and veiled Destinies,  
 Splendors and Glooms, and glimmering  
 Incarnations

Of hopes and fears, and twilight Phan-  
 tasies;

And Sorrow, with her family of Sighs,  
 And Pleasure, blind with tears, led by the  
 gleam

Of her own dying smile instead of eyes,  
 Came in slow pomp;—the moving pomp  
 might seem

Like pageantry of mist on an autumnal  
 stream.

All he had loved, and moulded into  
 thought,

From shape, and hue, and odor, and sweet  
 sound,

Lamented Adonais. Morning sought  
 Her eastern watchtower, and her hair  
 unbound,

Wet with the tears which should adorn the  
 ground,

Dimmed the aërial eyes that kindle day;  
 Afar the melancholy thunder moaned,



Pale Ocean in unquiet slumber lay,  
And the wild winds flew round, sobbing  
in their dismay.

Lost Echo sits amid the voiceless moun-  
tains,  
And feeds her grief with his remembered  
lay,  
And will no more reply to winds or foun-  
tains,  
Or amorous birds perched on the young  
green spray,  
Or herdsman's horn, or bell at closing  
day;  
Since she can mimic not his lips, more  
dear  
Than those for whose disdain she pined  
away  
Into a shadow of all sounds:— a drear  
Murmur, between their songs, is all the  
woodmen hear.

Grief made the young Spring wild, and  
she threw down  
Her kindling buds, as if she Autumn were,  
Or they dead leaves; since her delight is  
flown  
For whom should she have waked the  
sullen year?  
To Phœbus was not Hyacinth so dear  
Nor to himself Narcissus, as to both  
Thou Adonais: wan they stand and sere  
Amid the faint companions of their youth,  
With dew all turned to tears; odor, to  
sighing ruth.

Thy spirit's sister, the lorn nightingale,  
Mourns not her mate with such melodious  
pain;  
Not so the eagle, who like thee could scale  
Heaven, and could nourish in the sun's  
domain  
Her mighty youth with morning, doth  
complain,  
Soaring and screaming round her empty  
nest,  
As Albion wails for thee; the curse of Cain  
Light on his head who pierced thy inno-  
cent breast  
And scared the angel soul that was its  
earthly guest!

Ah woe is me! Winter is come and gone,  
But grief returns with the revolving year;  
The airs and streams renew their joyous  
tone:

The ants, the bees, the swallows re-  
appear;  
Fresh leaves and flowers deck the dead  
Seasons' bier;  
The amorous birds now pair in every  
brake,  
And build their mossy homes in field and  
brere;  
And the green lizard, and the golden  
snake,  
Like unimprisoned flames, out of their  
trance awake.

Through wood and stream and field and  
hill and Ocean  
A quickening life from the Earth's heart  
has burst  
As it has ever done, with change and  
motion,  
From the great morning of the world  
when first  
God dawned on Chaos; in its stream im-  
mersed  
The lamps of Heaven flash with a softer  
light;  
All baser things pant with life's sacred  
thirst;  
Diffuse themselves; and spend in love's  
delight,  
The beauty and the joy of their renewèd  
might.

The leprous corpse touched by this spirit  
tender  
Exhales itself in flowers of gentle breath;  
Like incarnations of the stars, when  
splendor  
Is changed to fragrance, they illumine  
death  
And mock the merry worm that wakes  
beneath;  
Nought we know, dies. Shall that alone  
which knows  
Be as a sword consumed before the  
sheath  
By sightless lightning?— th' intense  
atom glows  
A moment, then is quenched in a most  
cold repose.

Alas! that all we loved of him should be  
But for our grief, as if it had not  
been,  
And grief itself be mortal! Woe is me!  
Whence are we, and why are we? of what  
scene

The actors or spectators? Great and mean  
Meet massed in death, who lends what  
life must borrow.  
As long as skies are blue, and fields are  
green,  
Evening must usher night, night urge the  
morrow,  
Month follow month with woe, and year  
wake year to sorrow.

He will awake no more, oh, never more!  
"Wake thou," cried Misery, "childless  
Mother, rise  
Out of thy sleep, and slake, in thy heart's  
core,  
A wound more fierce than his with tears  
and sighs."  
And all the Dreams that watched  
Urania's eyes,  
And all the Echoes whom their sister's  
song  
Had held in holy silence, cried: "Arise!"  
Swift as a Thought by the snake Memory  
stung,  
From her ambrosial rest the fading  
Splendor sprung.

She rose like an autumnal Night, that  
springs  
Out of the East, and follows wild and  
drear  
The golden Day, which, on eternal wings,  
Even as a ghost abandoning a bier,  
Had left the Earth a corpse. Sorrow  
and fear  
So struck, so roused, so rapt Urania;  
So saddened round her like an atmos-  
phere  
Of stormy mist; so swept her on her  
way  
Even to the mournful place where  
Adonais lay.

Out of her secret Paradise she sped,  
Through camps and cities rough with  
stone, and steel,  
And human hearts, which to her airy  
tread  
Yielding not, wounded the invisible  
Palms of her tender feet where'er they  
fell:  
And barbèd tongues, and thoughts more  
sharp than they  
Rent the soft Form they never could  
repel,

Whose sacred blood, like the young tears  
of May,  
Paved with eternal flowers that undeserv-  
ing way.

In the death chamber for a moment Death  
Shamed by the presence of that living  
Might

Blushed to annihilation, and the breath  
Revisited those lips, and life's pale light  
Flashed through those limbs, so late her  
dear delight.

"Leave me not wild and drear and com-  
fortless,

As silent lightning leaves the starless  
night!

Leave me not!" cried Urania: her distress  
Roused Death: Death rose and smiled,  
and met her vain caress.

"Stay yet awhile! speak to me once  
again;

Kiss me, so long but as a kiss may live;  
And in my heartless breast and burning  
brain

That word, that kiss, shall all thoughts  
else survive,

With food of saddest memory kept alive,  
Now thou art dead, as if it were a part  
Of thee, my Adonais! I would give  
All that I am to be as thou now art!  
But I am chained to Time, and cannot  
thence depart!

"O gentle child, beautiful as thou wert,  
Why didst thou leave the trodden paths  
of men

Too soon, and with weak hands though  
mighty heart

Dare the unpastured dragon in his den?  
Defenceless as thou wert, oh where was  
then

Wisdom the mirrored shield, or scorn the  
spear?

Or hadst thou waited the full cycle, when  
Thy spirit should have filled its crescent  
sphere,

The monsters of life's waste had fled from  
thee like deer.

"The herded wolves, bold only to pursue;  
The obscene ravens, clamorous o'er the  
dead;

The vultures to the conqueror's banner  
true

Who feed where Desolation first has fed,

And whose wings rain contagion; — how  
 they fled,  
 When like Apollo, from his golden bow,  
 The Pythian of the age one arrow sped  
 And smiled! — The spoilers tempt no  
 second blow,  
 They fawn on the proud feet that spurn  
 them lying low.

“The sun comes forth, and many reptiles  
 spawn;  
 He sets, and each ephemeral insect then  
 Is gathered into death without a dawn,  
 And the immortal stars awake again;  
 So is it in the world of living men:  
 A godlike mind soars forth, in its delight  
 Making earth bare and veiling heaven,  
 and when  
 It sinks, the swarms that dimmed or  
 shared its light  
 Leave to its kindred lamps the spirit’s  
 awful night.”

Thus ceased she: and the mountain  
 shepherds came,  
 Their garlands sere, their magic mantles  
 rent;

The Pilgrim of Eternity, whose fame  
 Over his living head like Heaven is bent,  
 An early but enduring monument,  
 Came, veiling all the lightnings of his  
 song

In sorrow; from her wilds Ierne sent  
 The sweetest lyrist of her saddest wrong,  
 And love taught grief to fall like music  
 from his tongue.

Midst others of less note, came one frail  
 Form,

A phantom among men; companionless  
 As the last cloud of an expiring storm  
 Whose thunder is its knell; he, as I guess,  
 Had gazed on Nature’s naked loveliness,  
 Actæon-like, and now he fled astray  
 With feeble steps o’er the world’s wilder-  
 ness,

And his own thoughts, along that rugged  
 way,  
 Pursued, like raging hounds, their father  
 and their prey.

A pardlike Spirit beautiful and swift —  
 A Love in desolation masked; — a Power  
 Girt round with weakness; — it can  
 scarce uplift  
 The weight of the superincumbent hour;

It is a dying lamp, a falling shower,  
 A breaking billow; — even whilst we  
 speak  
 Is it not broken? On the withering  
 flower  
 The killing sun smiles brightly: on a  
 cheek  
 The life can burn in blood, even while the  
 heart may break.

His head was bound with pansies over-  
 blown,  
 And faded violets, white, and pied, and  
 blue;  
 And a light spear topped with a cypress  
 cone,  
 Round whose rude shaft dark ivy tresses  
 grew  
 Yet dripping with the forest’s noonday  
 dew,  
 Vibrated, as the ever-beating heart  
 Shook the weak hand that grasped it;  
 of that crew  
 He came the last, neglected and apart;  
 A herd-abandoned deer struck by the  
 hunter’s dart.

All stood aloof, and at his partial moan  
 Smiled through their tears; well knew  
 that gentle band

Who in another’s fate now wept his own;  
 As in the accents of an unknown land,  
 He sung new sorrow; sad Urania scanned  
 The Stranger’s mien, and murmured:  
 “Who art thou?”

He answered not, but with a sudden hand  
 Made bare his branded and ensanguined  
 brow,  
 Which was like Cain’s or Christ’s — oh,  
 that it should be so!

What softer voice is hushed over the  
 dead?

Athwart what brow is that dark mantle  
 thrown?

What form leans sadly o’er the white  
 deathbed,

In mockery of monumental stone,  
 The heavy heart heaving without a  
 moan?

If it be He, who, gentlest of the wise,  
 Taught, soothed, loved, honored the  
 departed one;

Let me not vex, with inharmonious sighs  
 The silence of that heart’s accepted  
 sacrifice.

Our Adonais has drunk poison — oh!  
What deaf and viperous murderer could  
crown

Life's early cup with such a draught of  
woe?

The nameless worm would now itself dis-  
own:

It felt, yet could escape the magic tone  
Whose prelude held all envy, hate, and  
wrong,

But what was howling in one breast alone,  
Silent with expectation of the song,  
Whose master's hand is cold, whose silver  
lyre unstrung.

Live thou, whose infamy is not thy fame!  
Live! fear no heavier chastisement from  
me,

Thou noteless blot on a remembered  
name!

But be thyself, and know thyself to be!  
And ever at thy season be thou free  
To spill the venom when thy fangs o'er-  
flow:

Remorse and Self-contempt shall cling  
to thee;

Hot Shame shall burn upon thy secret  
brow,

And like a beaten hound tremble thou  
shalt — as now.<sup>1</sup>

Nor let us weep that our delight is fled  
Far from these carrion kites that scream  
below;

He wakes or sleeps with the enduring  
dead;

Thou canst not soar where he is sitting  
now. —

Dust to the dust! but the pure spirit  
shall flow

Back to the burning fountain whence it  
came,

A portion of the Eternal, which must glow  
Through time and change, unquenchably  
the same,

Whilst thy cold embers choke the sordid  
hearth of shame.

Peace, peace! he is not dead, he doth not  
sleep —

He hath awakened from the dream of  
life —

'Tis we, who lost in stormy visions, keep  
With phantoms an unprofitable strife,

And in mad trance, strike with our spirit's  
knife

Invulnerable nothings. — *We* decay  
Like corpses in a charnel; fear and grief  
Convulse us and consume us day by day,  
And cold hopes swarm like worms within  
our living clay.

He has outsoared the shadow of our night;  
Envy and calumny and hate and pain.  
And that unrest which men miscall de-  
light,

Can touch him not and torture not again;  
From the contagion of the world's slow  
stain

He is secure, and now can never mourn  
A heart grown cold, a head grown gray  
in vain;

Nor, when the spirit's self has ceased to  
burn,

With sparkless ashes load an unlamented  
urn.

He lives, he wakes — 'tis Death is dead,  
not he;

Mourn not for Adonais, — Thou young  
Dawn

Turn all thy dew to splendor, for from  
thee

The spirit thou lamentest is not gone;  
Ye caverns and ye forests, cease to moan!  
Cease ye faint flowers and fountains,  
and thou Air

Which like a mourning veil thy scarf  
hadst thrown

O'er the abandoned Earth, now leave it  
bare

Even to the joyous stars which smile on  
its despair!

He is made one with Nature: there is  
heard

His voice in all her music, from the moan  
Of thunder to the song of night's sweet  
bird;

He is a presence to be felt and known  
In darkness and in light, from herb and  
stone,

Spreading itself where'er that Power may  
move

Which has withdrawn his being to its  
own;

Which wields the world with never  
wearied love,

Sustains it from beneath, and kindles it  
above.

<sup>1</sup> See the note on page 228.

He is a portion of the loveliness  
Which once he made more lovely: he  
doth bear

His part, while the one Spirit's plastic  
stress

Sweeps through the dull dense world,  
compelling there

All new successions to the forms they  
wear;

Torturing th' unwilling dross that checks  
its flight

To its own likeness, as each mass may  
bear;

And bursting in its beauty and its might  
From trees and beasts and men into the  
Heaven's light.

The splendors of the firmament of time  
May be eclipsed, but are extinguished  
not;

Like stars to their appointed height they  
climb

And death is a low mist which cannot  
blot

The brightness it may veil. When lofty  
thought

Lifts a young heart above its mortal lair,  
And love and life contend in it, for what  
Shall be its earthly doom, the dead live  
there

And move like winds of light on dark and  
stormy air.

The inheritors of unfulfilled renown  
Rose from their thrones, built beyond  
mortal thought,

Far in the Unapparent. Chatterton  
Rose pale, his solemn agony had not  
Yet faded from him; Sidney, as he fought  
And as he fell and as he lived and loved  
Sublimely mild, a Spirit without spot,  
Arose; and Lucan, by his death approved:  
Oblivion as they rose shrank like a thing  
reproved.

And many more, whose names on Earth  
are dark

But whose transmitted effluence cannot  
die

So long as fire outlives the parent spark,  
Rose, robed in dazzling immortality.

"Thou art become as one of us," they  
cry,

"It was for thee yon kingless sphere has  
long

Swung blind in unascended majesty,

Silent alone amid an Heaven of Song.  
Assume thy wingèd throne, thou Vesper  
of our throng!"

Who mourns for Adonais? Oh come  
forth

Fond wretch! and know thyself and him  
aright.

Clasp with thy panting soul the pendu-  
lous Earth;

As from a centre, dart thy spirit's light  
Beyond all worlds, until its spacious might  
Sate the void circumference: then  
shrink

Even to a point within our day and  
night;

And keep thy heart light lest it make thee  
sink

When hope has kindled hope and lured  
thee to the brink.

Or go to Rome, which is the sepulchre  
Oh! not of him, but of our joy: 'tis  
nought

That ages, empires, and religions there  
Lie buried in the ravage they have  
wrought;

For such as he can lend, — they borrow not  
Glory from those who made the world  
their prey;

And he is gathered to the kings of thought  
Who waged contention with their time's  
decay,

And of the past are all that cannot pass  
away.

Go thou to Rome, — at once the Paradise,  
The grave, the city, and the wilderness;  
And where its wrecks like shattered  
mountains rise,

And flowering weeds, and fragrant copses  
dress

The bones of Desolation's nakedness,  
Pass, till the Spirit of the spot shall lead  
Thy footsteps to a slope of green access  
Where, like an infant's smile, over the dead  
A light of laughing flowers along the  
grass is spread.

And gray walls moulder round, on which  
dull Time

Feeds, like slow fire upon a hoary brand;  
And one keen pyramid with wedge sub-  
lime,

Pavilioning the dust of him who planned  
This refuge for his memory, doth stand



Like flame transformed to marble; and  
 beneath,  
 A field is spread, on which a newer band  
 Have pitched in Heaven's smile their  
 camp of death  
 Welcoming him we lose with scarce ex-  
 tinguished breath.

Here pause: these graves are all too  
 young as yet  
 To have outgrown the sorrow which con-  
 signed

Its charge to each; and if the seal is set,  
 Here, on one fountain of a mourning mind,  
 Break it not thou! too surely shalt thou  
 find

Thine own well full, if thou returnest home,  
 Of tears and gall. From the world's  
 bitter wind

Seek shelter in the shadow of the tomb.  
 What Adonais is, why fear we to be-  
 come?

The One remains, the many change and  
 pass;

Heaven's light forever shines, Earth's  
 shadows fly;

Life, like a dome of many-colored glass,  
 Stains the white radiance of Eternity,  
 Until Death tramples it to fragments.  
 — Die,

If thou wouldst be with that which thou  
 dost seek!

Follow where all is fled! — Rome's azure  
 sky,

Flowers, ruins, statues, music, words,  
 are weak

The glory they transfuse with fitting  
 truth to speak.

Why linger, why turn back, why shrink,  
 my Heart?

Thy hopes are gone before: from all  
 things here

They have departed; thou shouldst now  
 depart!

A light is past from the revolving year,  
 And man, and woman; and what still is  
 dear

Attracts to crush, repels to make thee  
 wither.

The soft sky smiles, — the low wind  
 whispers near;

'Tis Adonais calls! oh, hasten thither,  
 No more let Life divide what Death can  
 join together.

That Light whose smile kindles the Uni-  
 verse,

That Beauty in which all things work and  
 move,

That Benediction which the eclipsing  
 Curse

Of birth can quench not, that sustain-  
 ing Love

Which through the web of being blindly  
 wove

By man and beast and earth and air and  
 sea,

Burns bright or dim, as each are mirrors of  
 The fire for which all thirst; now beams

on me,  
 Consuming the last clouds of cold mortal-  
 ity.

The breath whose might I have invoked  
 in song

Descends on me; my spirit's bark is  
 driven,

Far from the shore, far from the trembling  
 throng

Whose sails were never to the tempest  
 given;

The massy earth and spherèd skies are  
 riven!

I am borne darkly, fearfully, afar;  
 Whilst burning through the inmost veil

of Heaven,  
 The soul of Adonais, like a star,

Beacons from the abode where the  
 Eternal are. 1821. 1821.

## SONGS FROM HELLAS

LIFE MAY CHANGE, BUT IT MAY FLY NOT

LIFE may change, but it may fly not;  
 Hope may vanish, but can die not;  
 Truth be veiled, but still it burneth;  
 Love repulsed, — but it returneth!

Yet were life a charnel where  
 Hope lay confined with Despair;  
 Yet were truth a sacred lie,  
 Love were lust — If Liberty

Lent not life its soul of light,  
 Hope its iris of delight,  
 Truth its prophet's robe to wear,  
 Love its power to give and bear.

1821. 1822.

WORLDS ON WORLDS ARE ROLLING EVER

WORLDS on worlds are rolling ever  
 From creation to decay,  
 Like the bubbles on a river  
 Sparkling, bursting, borne away.  
 But they are still immortal  
 Who, through birth's orient portal  
 And death's dark chasm hurrying to and  
 fro,  
 Clothe their unceasing flight  
 In the brief dust and light  
 Gathered around their chariots as they  
 go;  
 New shapes they still may weave,  
 New gods, new laws receive,  
 Bright or dim are they as the robes they  
 last  
 On Death's bare ribs had cast.

A power from the unknown God,  
 A Promethean conqueror came;  
 Like a triumphal path he trod  
 The thorns of death and shame.  
 A mortal shape to him  
 Was like the vapor dim  
 Which the orient planet animates with  
 light;  
 Hell, Sin, and Slavery came,  
 Like bloodhounds mild and tame,  
 Nor preyed, until their Lord had taken  
 flight;  
 The moon of Mahomet  
 Arose, and it shall set:  
 While blazoned as on heaven's immortal  
 noon  
 The cross leads generations on.

Swift as the radiant shapes of sleep  
 From one whose dreams are Para-  
 dise  
 Fly, when the fond wretch wakes to  
 weep,  
 And day peers forth with her blank  
 eyes;  
 So fleet, so faint, so fair,  
 The Powers of earth and air  
 Fled from the folding star of Bethlehem:  
 Apollo, Pan, and Love,  
 And even Olympian Jove  
 Grew weak, for killing Truth had glared  
 on them;  
 Our hills and seas and streams  
 Dispeopled of their dreams,

Their waters turned to blood, their dew  
 to tears,  
 Wailed for the golden years.  
 1821. 1822.

DARKNESS HAS DAWNED IN THE EAST

DARKNESS has dawned in the East  
 On the noon of time:  
 The death-birds descend to their feast,  
 From the hungry clime.  
 Let Freedom and Peace flee far  
 To a sunnier strand,  
 And follow Love's folding star  
 To the Evening land!

The young moon has fed  
 Her exhausted horn,  
 With the sunset's fire:  
 The weak day is dead,  
 But the night is not born;  
 And, like loveliness panting with wild  
 desire  
 While it trembles with fear and delight,  
 Hesperus flies from awakening night,  
 And pants in its beauty and speed with  
 light  
 Fast flashing, soft, and bright.  
 Thou beacon of love! thou lamp of the  
 free!  
 Guide us far, far away,  
 To climes where now veiled by the ardor  
 of day  
 Thou art hidden  
 From waves on which weary noon  
 Faints in her summer swoon,  
 Between Kingless continents sinless as  
 Eden,  
 Around mountains and islands invio-  
 lably  
 Prankt on the sapphire sea.

Through the sunset of hope,  
 Like the shapes of a dream,  
 What Paradise islands of glory gleam!  
 Beneath Heaven's cope,  
 Their shadows more clear float by —  
 The sound of their oceans, the light  
 of their sky,  
 The music and fragrance their soli-  
 tudes breathe  
 Burst, like morning on a dream, or like  
 Heaven on death  
 Through the walls of our prison;  
 And Greece, which was dead, is arisen!  
 1821. 1822.

FINAL CHORUS : THE WORLD'S GREAT AGE  
BEGINS ANEW

THE world's great age begins anew,  
The golden years return,  
The earth doth like a snake renew  
Her winter weeds outworn :  
Heaven smiles, and faiths and empires  
gleam,  
Like wrecks of a dissolving dream.

A brighter Hellas rears its mountains  
From waves serener far ;  
A new Peneus rolls his fountains  
Against the morning star.  
Where fairer Tempes bloom, there sleep  
Young Cyclads on a sunnier deep.

A loftier Argo cleaves the main,  
Fraught with a later prize ;  
Another Orpheus sings again,  
And loves, and weeps, and dies.  
A new Ulysses leaves once more  
Calypso for his native shore.

Oh, write no more the tale of Troy,  
If earth Death's scroll must be !  
Nor mix with Laian rage the joy  
Which dawns upon the free :  
Although a subtler Sphinx renew  
Riddles of death Thebes never knew.

Another Athens shall arise,  
And to remoter time  
Bequeath, like sunset to the skies,  
The splendor of its prime ;  
And leave, if nought so bright may live,  
All earth can take or Heaven can give.

Saturn and Love their long repose  
Shall burst, more bright and good  
Than all who fell, than One who rose,  
Than many unsubdued :<sup>1</sup>  
Not gold, not blood, their altar dowers,  
But votive tears and symbol flowers.

<sup>1</sup> *Saturn and Love* were among the deities of a real or imaginary state of innocence and happiness. All those who fell, or the Gods, of Greece, Asia, and Egypt ; the *One who rose*, or Jesus Christ, at whose appearance the idols of the Pagan World were amerced of their worship ; and the *many unsubdued*, or the monstrous objects of the idolatry of China, India, the Antarctic islands, and the native tribes of America, certainly have reigned over the understandings of men in conjunction or in succession, during periods in which all we know of evil has been in a state of portentous, and, until the revival of learning and the arts, perpetually increasing activity. (*From Shelley's note.*)

Oh, cease ! must hate and death return ?  
Cease ! must men kill and die ?  
Cease ! drain not to its dregs the urn  
Of bitter prophecy.  
The world is weary of the past,  
Oh, might it die or rest at last !  
1821. 1822.

TO-MORROW

WHERE art thou, beloved To-morrow ?  
When young and old and strong and  
weak,  
Rich and poor, through joy and sorrow,  
Thy sweet smiles we ever seek, —  
In thy place — ah ! well-a-day !  
We find the thing we fled — To-day.  
1821. 1824.

TO —

ONE word is too often profaned  
For me to profane it,  
One feeling too falsely disdained  
For thee to disdain it.  
One hope is too like despair  
For prudence to smother,  
And pity from thee more dear  
Than that from another.

I can give not what men call love,  
But wilt thou accept not  
The worship the heart lifts above  
And the Heavens reject not,  
The desire of the moth for the star,  
Of the night for the morrow,  
The devotion to something afar  
From the sphere of our sorrow ?  
1821. 1824.

WITH A GUITAR, TO JANE

ARIEL to Miranda. — Take  
This slave of Music, for the sake  
Of him who is the slave of thee,  
And teach it all the harmony  
In which thou canst, and only thou,  
Make the delighted spirit glow,  
Till joy denies itself again,  
And, too intense, is turned to pain ;  
For by permission and command  
Of thine own Prince Ferdinand,  
Poor Ariel sends this silent token  
Of more than ever can be spoken ;

Your guardian spirit, Ariel, who,  
 From life to life, must still pursue  
 Your happiness; — for thus alone  
 Can Ariel ever find his own.  
 From Prospero's enchanted cell,  
 As the mighty verses tell,  
 To the throne of Naples, he  
 Lit you o'er the trackless sea,  
 Flitting on, your prow before,  
 Like a living meteor.  
 When you die, the silent Moon,  
 In her interlunar swoon,  
 Is not sadder in her cell  
 Than deserted Ariel.  
 When you live again on earth,  
 Like an unseen star of birth,  
 Ariel guides you o'er the sea  
 Of life from your nativity.  
 Many changes have been run,  
 Since Ferdinand and you begun  
 Your course of love, and Ariel still  
 Has tracked your steps, and served your  
     will;  
 Now, in humbler, happier lot,  
 This is all remembered not;  
 And now, alas! the poor sprite is  
 Imprisoned, for some fault of his,  
 In a body like a grave; —  
 From you he only dares to crave,  
 For his service and his sorrow,  
 A smile to-day, a song to-morrow.

The artist who this idol wrought,  
 To echo all harmonious thought,  
 Felled a tree, while on the steep  
 The woods were in their winter sleep,  
 Rocked in that repose divine  
 On the wind-swept Apennine;  
 And dreaming, some of Autumn past,  
 And some of Spring approaching fast,  
 And some of April buds and showers,  
 And some of songs in July bowers,  
 And all of love; and so this tree, —  
 Oh that such our death may be! —  
 Died in sleep, and felt no pain,  
 To live in happier form again:  
 From which, beneath Heaven's fairest star,  
 The artist wrought this loved Guitar,  
 And taught it justly to reply,  
 To all who question skilfully,  
 In language gentle as thine own;  
 Whispering in enamored tone  
 Sweet oracles of woods and dells,  
 And summer winds in sylvan cells;  
 For it had learnt all harmonies  
 Of the plains and of the skies,

Of the forests and the mountains;  
 And the many-voicèd fountains;  
 The clearest echoes of the hills,  
 The softest notes of falling rills,  
 The melodies of birds and bees,  
 The murmuring of summer seas,  
 And patterning rain, and breathing dew,  
 And airs of evening; and it knew  
 That seldom-heard mysterious sound,  
 Which, driven on its diurnal round,  
 As it floats through boundless day,  
 Our world enkindles on its way —  
 All this it knows, but will not tell  
 To those who cannot question well  
 The spirit that inhabits it;  
 It talks according to the wit  
 Of its companions; and no more  
 Is heard than has been felt before,  
 By those who tempt it to betray  
 These secrets of an elder day:  
 But sweetly as its answers will  
 Flatter hands of perfect skill,  
 It keeps its highest, holiest tone  
 For our belovèd Jane alone.

1822. 1832-1833.

# LINES: "WHEN THE LAMP IS SHATTERED"

WHEN the lamp is shattered  
 The light in the dust lies dead —  
 When the cloud is scattered  
 The rainbow's glory is shed.  
 When the lute is broken,  
 Sweet tones are remembered not;  
 When the lips have spoken,  
 Loved accents are soon forgot.

As music and splendor  
 Survive not the lamp and the lute,  
 The heart's echoes render  
 No song when the spirit is mute: —  
 No song but sad dirges,  
 Like the wind through a ruined cell,  
 Or the mournful surges  
 That ring the dead seaman's knell.

When hearts have once mingled  
 Love first leaves the well-built nest,  
 The weak one is singled  
 To endure what it once possessed.  
 O Love! who bewailest  
 The frailty of all things here,  
 Why choose you the frailest  
 For your cradle, your home, and your bier?

Its passions will rock thee  
As the storms rock the ravens on high :

Bright reason will mock thee,  
Like the sun from a wintry sky.

From thy nest every rafter  
Will rot, and thine eagle home

Leave thee naked to laughter,  
When leaves fall and cold winds come.

1822. 1824.

#### SONG FROM CHARLES THE FIRST

A widow bird sate mourning for her love  
Upon a wintry bough ;

The frozen wind crept on above,  
The freezing stream below.

There was no leaf upon the forest bare,  
No flower upon the ground,  
And little motion in the air  
Except the mill-wheel's sound.

1822. 1824.

#### A DIRGE

ROUGH wind, that moanest loud

Grief too sad for song ;

Wild wind, when sullen cloud

Knells all the night long ;

Sad storm, whose tears are vain,

Bare woods, whose branches strain,

Deep caves and dreary main,

Wail, for the world's wrong !

1822. 1824.



# KEATS

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# KEATS

## IMITATION OF SPENSER<sup>1</sup>

Now Morning from her orient chamber  
came,  
And her first footsteps touch'd a verdant  
hill;  
Crowning its lawny crest with amber  
flame,  
Silv'ring the untainted gushes of its rill;  
Which, pure from mossy beds, did down  
distill,  
And after parting beds of simple flowers,  
By many streams a little lake did fill,  
Which round its marge reflected woven  
bowers,  
And, in its middle space, a sky that never  
lowers.

There the king-fisher saw his plumage  
bright  
Vieing with fish of brilliant dye below;  
Whose silken fins, and golden scalèls light  
Cast upward, through the waves, a ruby  
glow:  
There saw the swan his neck of arched  
snow,  
And oar'd himself along with majesty;  
Sparkled his jetty eyes; his feet did  
show  
Beneath the waves like Afric's ebony,  
And on his back a fay reclined voluptu-  
ously.

Ah! could I tell the wonders of an isle  
That in that fairest lake had placed  
been,  
I could e'en Dido of her grief beguile;  
Or rob from aged Lear his bitter teen:  
For sure so fair a place was never seen,  
Of all that ever charm'd romantic eye:

<sup>1</sup> "It was the *Faerie Queene* that awakened his genius. In Spenser's fairy-land he was enchanted, breathed in a new world, and became another being; till, enamored of the stanza, he attempted to imitate it, and succeeded. . . . This, his earliest attempt, the 'Imitation of Spenser,' is in his first volume of poems." (Quoted by Colvin from the Houghton MSS.)

It seem'd an emerald in the silver sheen  
Of the bright waters; or as when on high,  
Through clouds of fleecy white, laughs  
the cerulean sky.

And all around it dipp'd luxuriously  
Sloping of verdure through the glossy  
tide,

Which, as it were in gentle amity,  
Rippled delighted up the flowery side;  
As if to glean the ruddy tears, it tried,  
Which fell profusely from the rose-tree  
stem!

Haply it was the workings of its pride,  
In strife to throw upon the shore a gem  
Outvieing all the buds in Flora's diadem.

1813 or 1814. 1817.<sup>1</sup>

## TO SOLITUDE

O SOLITUDE! if I must with thee dwell,  
Let it not be among the jumbled heap  
Of murky buildings; climb with me the  
steep,—

Nature's observatory — whence the dell,  
Its flowery slopes, its river's crystal swell  
May seem a span; let me thy vigils keep  
'Mongst boughs pavilion'd where the  
deer's swift leap

Startles the wild bee from the fox-glove  
bell.

But though I'll gladly trace these scenes  
with thee,

Yet the sweet converse of an innocent  
mind,

Whose words are images of thoughts  
refin'd,

Is my soul's pleasure; and it sure must be  
Almost the highest bliss of human-kind,  
When to thy haunts two kindred spirits  
flee. ? 1815. May 5, 1816.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The dates for Keats's poems are made up from Sidney Colvin's careful study of the order of composition of the poems, in his *Life of Keats*, and from H. Buxton Forman's excellent notes in his edition of Keats's *Works*.

<sup>2</sup> In Leigh Hunt's *Examiner*. Probably the first lines of Keats ever printed.

### HOW MANY BARDS GILD THE LAPSES OF TIME

How many bards gild the lapses of time!  
A few of them have ever been the food  
Of my delighted fancy, — I could brood  
Over their beauties, earthly, or sublime:  
And often, when I sit me down to rhyme,  
These will in throngs before my mind  
intrude:

But no confusion, no disturbance rude  
Do they occasion; 'tis a pleasing chime.  
So the unnumber'd sounds that evening  
store;

The songs of birds — the whisp'ring of the  
leaves —

The voice of waters — the great bell that  
heaves

With solemn sound, — and thousand  
others more,

That distance of recognizance bereaves,  
Make pleasing music, and not wild up-  
roar. ? 1816. 1817.

### KEEN, FITFUL GUSTS ARE WHIS- PERING HERE AND THERE

KEEN, fitful gusts are whispering here  
and there

Among the bushes half leafless, and dry;  
The stars look very cold about the sky,  
And I have many miles on foot to fare.

Yet feel I little of the cool bleak air,  
Or of the dead leaves rustling drearily,  
Or of those silver lamps that burn on  
high,

Or of the distance from home's pleasant  
lair:

For I am brimful of the friendliness  
That in a little cottage I have found;  
Of fair-hair'd Milton's eloquent distress,  
And all his love for gentle Lycid drown'd;  
Of lovely Laura in her light green dress,  
And faithful Petrarch gloriously crown'd.

? 1816. 1817.

### TO ONE WHO HAS BEEN LONG IN CITY PENT

To one who has been long in city pent  
'Tis very sweet to look into the fair  
And open face of heaven, — to breathe a  
prayer

Full in the smile of the blue firmament.

Who is more happy, when, with heart's  
content,

Fatigued he sinks into some pleasant lair  
Of wavy grass, and reads a debonair

And gentle tale of love and languishment?

Returning home at evening, with an ear

Catching the notes of Philomel, — an eye

Watching the sailing cloudlet's bright  
career,

He mourns that day so soon has glided  
by:

E'en like the passage of an angel's tear  
That falls through the clear ether silently.

June, 1816. 1817.

### ON FIRST LOOKING INTO CHAPMAN'S HOMER

MUCH have I travell'd in the realms of  
gold,

And many goodly states and kingdoms  
seen;

Round many western islands have I been  
Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.

Of one wide expanse had I been told  
That deep-browed Homer ruled as his  
demesne;

Yet did I never breathe its pure serene  
Till I heard Chapman speak out loud  
and bold:

Then felt I like some watcher of the skies  
When a new planet swims into his ken;

Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes  
He star'd at the Pacific — and all his men

Look'd at each other with a wild sur-  
mise —

Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

1816. December 1, 1816.

### GREAT SPIRITS NOW ON EARTH ARE SOJOURNING

GREAT spirits now on earth are sojourn-  
ing;

He of the cloud, the cataract, the lake,  
Who on Helvellyn's summit, wide awake,

Catches his freshness from Archangel's  
wing;

He of the rose, the violet, the spring,  
The social smile, the chain for Freedom's

sake:

And lo! — whose steadfastness would  
never take

A meaner sound than Raphael's whis-  
pering.



And other spirits there are standing apart  
Upon the forehead of the age to come;  
These, these will give the world another  
heart

And other pulses. Hear ye not the hum  
Of mighty workings in the human mart?  
Listen awhile ye nations, and be dumb.

*November, 1816. 1817.*

### ON THE GRASSHOPPER AND CRICKET

THE poetry of earth is never dead;  
When all the birds are faint with the hot  
sun,

And hide in cooling trees, a voice will run  
From hedge to hedge about the new-  
mown mead;

That is the Grasshopper's — he takes the  
lead

In summer luxury, — he has never done  
With his delights; for when tired out  
with fun

He rests at ease beneath some pleasant  
weed.

The poetry of earth is ceasing never;  
On a lone winter evening, when the frost  
Has wrought a silence, from the stove  
there shrills

The Cricket's song, in warmth increasing  
ever,

And seems to me in drowsiness half lost,  
The Grasshopper's among some grassy  
hills. *December 30, 1816. 1817.*

### SLEEP AND POETRY

"As I lay in my bed slepe full unmete  
"Was unto me, but why that I ne might  
"Rest I ne wist, for there n'as erthly wight  
"[As I suppose] had more of hertis ese  
"Than I, for I n'ad sicknesse nor disese."

CHAUCER.

WHAT is more gentle than a wind in  
summer?

What is more soothing than the pretty  
hummer

That stays one moment in an open  
flower,

And buzzes cheerily from bower to bower?

What is more tranquil than a muskrose  
blowing

In a green island, far from all men's  
knowing?

More healthful than the leafiness of dales?

More secret than a nest of nightingales?  
More serene than Cordelia's countenance?  
More full of visions than a high romance?  
What, but thee, Sleep? Soft closer of our  
eyes!

Low murmurer of tender lullabies!  
Light hoverer around our happy pillows!  
Wreather of poppy buds, and weeping  
willows!

Silent entangler of a beauty's tresses!  
Most happy listener! when the morning  
blesses

Thee for enlivening all the cheerful eyes  
That glance so brightly at the new sun-  
rise.

But what is higher beyond thought than  
thee?

Fresher than berries of a mountain tree?  
More strange, more beautiful, more  
smooth, more regal,

Than wings of swans, than doves, than  
dim-seen eagle?

What is it? And to what shall I compare  
it?

It has a glory, and nought else can share  
it:

The thought thereof is awful, sweet, and  
holy,

Chasing away all worldliness and folly;  
Coming sometimes like fearful claps of  
thunder,

Or the low rumblings earth's regions  
under;

And sometimes like a gentle whispering  
Of all the secrets of some wondrous thing  
That breathes about us in the vacant air:  
So that we look around with prying stare,  
Perhaps to see shapes of light, aerial  
limning,

And catch soft floatings from a faint-  
heard hymning;

To see the laurel wreath, on high sus-  
pended,

That is to crown our name when life is  
ended.

Sometimes it gives a glory to the voice,  
And from the heart up-springs, rejoice!  
rejoice!

Sounds which will reach the Framer of  
all things,

And die away in ardent mutterings.

No one who once the glorious sun has seen  
And all the clouds, and felt his bosom  
clear

For his great Maker's presence, but must  
know

What 'tis I mean, and feel his being glow :  
Therefore no insult will I give his spirit,  
By telling what he sees from native merit.

O Poesy ! for thee I hold my pen  
That am not yet a glorious denizen  
Of thy wide heaven — Should I rather  
kneel

Upon some mountain-top until I feel  
A glowing splendor round about me hung,  
And echo back the voice of thine own  
tongue ?

O Poesy ! for thee I grasp my pen  
That am not yet a glorious denizen  
Of thy wide heaven ; yet, to my ardent  
prayer,

Yield from thy sanctuary some clear air,  
Smoothed for intoxication by the breath  
Of flowering bays, that I may die a death  
Of luxury, and my young spirit follow  
The morning sun-beams to the great  
Apollo

Like a fresh sacrifice ; or if I can bear  
The o'erwhelming sweets, 'twill bring me  
to the fair

Visions of all places : a bowery nook  
Will be elysium — an eternal book  
Whence I may copy many a lovely saying  
About the leaves, and flowers — about  
the playing

Of nymphs in woods, and fountains ; and  
the shade

Keeping a silence round a sleeping maid  
And many a verse from so strange in-  
fluence

That we must ever wonder how, and  
whence

It came. Also imaginings will hover  
Round my fireside, and haply there dis-  
cover

Vistas of solemn beauty, where I'd wander  
In happy silence, like the clear meander  
Through its lone vales ; and where I  
found a spot

Of awfuller shade, or an enchanted grot,  
Or a green hill o'erspread with chequered  
dress

Of flowers, and fearful from its loveliness,  
Write on my tablets all that was per-  
mitted,

All that was for our human senses fitted.  
Then the events of this wide world I'd  
seize

Like a strong giant, and my spirit tease

Till at its shoulders it should proudly see  
Wings to find out an immortality.

Stop and consider ! life is but a day ;  
A fragile dew-drop on its perilous way  
From a tree's summit ; a poor Indian's  
sleep

While his boat hastens to the monstrous  
steep

Of Montmorenci. Why so sad a moan ?  
Life is the rose's hope while yet unblown ;  
The reading of an ever-changing tale ;  
The light uplifting of a maiden's veil ;  
A pigeon tumbling in clear summer air ;  
A laughing school-boy, without grief or  
care,

Riding the springy branches of an elm.

O for ten years, that I may overwhelm  
Myself in poesy ; so I may do the deed  
That my own soul has to itself decreed.  
Then I will pass the countries that I see  
In long perspective, and continually  
Taste their pure fountains. First the  
realm I'll pass

Of Flora, and old Pan ; sleep in the grass,  
Feed upon apples red, and strawberries,  
And choose each pleasure that my fancy  
sees ;

Catch the white-handed nymphs in  
shady places,

To woo sweet kisses from averted faces, —  
Play with their fingers, touch their  
shoulders white

Into a pretty shrinking with a bite  
As hard as lips can make it : till agreed,  
A lovely tale of human life we'll read.  
And one will teach a tame dove how it  
best

May fan the cool air gently o'er my rest ;  
Another, bending o'er her nimble tread,  
Will set a green robe floating round her  
head,

And still will dance with ever varied ease,  
Smiling upon the flowers and the trees :  
Another will entice me on, and on  
Through almond blossoms and rich cin-  
namon ;

Till in the bosom of a leafy world  
We rest in silence, like two gems up-  
curl'd

In the recesses of a pearly shell.

And can I ever bid these joys farewell ?  
Yes, I must pass them for a nobler life,  
Where I may find the agonies, the strife

Of human hearts: for lo! I see afar,  
O'er-sailing the blue cragginess, a car  
And steeds with streamy manes — the  
    charioteer

Looks out upon the winds with glorious  
fear:

And now the numerous tramlings  
quiver lightly

Along a huge cloud's ridge; and now  
with sprightly

Wheel downward come they into fresher  
skies,

Tipt round with silver from the sun's  
bright eyes.

Still downward with capacious whirl  
they glide;

And now I see them on a green-hill's side  
In breezy rest among the nodding stalks.

The charioteer with wond'rous gesture  
talks

To the trees and mountains; and there  
soon appear

Shapes of delight, of mystery, and fear,  
Passing along before a dusky space

Made, by some mighty oaks: as they  
would chase

Some ever-fleeting music on they sweep.  
Lo! how they murmur, laugh, and smile,

and weep:

Some with upholden hand and mouth  
severe;

Some with their faces muffled to the ear  
Between their arms; some, clear in

youthful bloom,  
Go glad and smilingly athwart the gloom;

Some looking back, and some with up-  
ward gaze;

Yes, thousands in a thousand different  
ways

Flit onward — now a lovely wreath of girls  
Dancing their sleek hair into tangled

curls;  
And now broad wings. Most awfully

intent  
The driver of those steeds is forward bent,  
And seems to listen: O that I might

know  
All that he writes with such a hurrying  
glow.

The visions all are fled — the car is fled  
Into the light of heaven, and in their

stead  
A sense of real things comes doubly strong,  
And, like a muddy stream, would bear

along

My soul to nothingness: but I will strive  
Against all doubtings, and will keep alive  
The thought of that same chariot, and  
    the strange  
Journey it went.

Is there so small a range,  
In the present strength of manhood, that  
the high

Imagination cannot freely fly  
As she was wont of old? prepare her

steeds,  
Paw up against the light, and do strange

deeds  
Upon the clouds? Has she not shewn us

all?  
From the clear space of ether, to the small  
Breath of new buds unfolding? From

the meaning  
Of Jove's large eye-brow, to the tender

greening  
Of April meadows? Here her altar shone,  
E'en in this isle; and who could paragon

The fervid choir that lifted up a noise  
Of harmony, to where it aye will poise

Its mighty self of convoluting sound,  
Huge as a planet, and like that roll round,

Eternally around a dizzy void?  
Ay, in those days the Muses were nigh

cloy'd  
With honors; nor had any other care  
Than to sing out and soothe their wavy

hair.

Could all this be forgotten? Yes, a  
schism

Nurtured by foppery and barbarism,  
Made great Apollo blush for this his

land.

Men were thought wise who could not  
understand

His glories: with a puling infant's force  
They sway'd about upon a rocking horse,

And thought it Pegasus. Ah dismal  
soul'd!

The winds of heaven blew, the ocean  
roll'd

Its gathering waves — ye felt it not.  
The blue

Bared its eternal bosom, and the dew  
Of summer nights collected still to make

The morning precious: beauty was awake!  
Why were ye not awake? But ye were

dead  
To things ye knew not of, — were closely  
wed

To blasphemous laws lined out with wretched  
 rule  
 And compass vile: so that ye taught a  
 school  
 Of dolts to smooth, inlay, and clip, and  
 fit,  
 Till, like the certain wands of Jacob's  
 wit,  
 Their verses tallied. Easy was the task:  
 A thousand handicraftsmen wore the  
 mask  
 Of Poesy. Ill-fated, impious race!  
 That blasphemed the bright Lyrists to his  
 face,  
 And did not know it,—no, they went  
 about,  
 Holding a poor, decrepit standard out  
 Mark'd with most flimsy mottos, and in  
 large  
 The name of one Boileau!

O ye whose charge  
 It is to hover round our pleasant hills!  
 Whose congregated majesty so fills  
 My boundly reverence, that I cannot  
 trace  
 Your hallowed names, in this unholy  
 place,  
 So near those common folk; did not their  
 shames  
 Affright you? Did our old lamenting  
 Thames  
 Delight you? Did ye never cluster  
 round  
 Delicious Avon, with a mournful sound,  
 And weep? Or did ye wholly bid adieu  
 To regions where no more the laurel  
 grew?  
 Or did ye stay to give a welcoming  
 To some lone spirits who could proudly  
 sing  
 Their youth away, and die? 'Twas even  
 so:  
 But let me think away those times of  
 woe:  
 Now 'tis a fairer season; ye have  
 breathed  
 Rich benedictions o'er us; ye have  
 wreathed  
 Fresh garlands: for sweet music has  
 been heard  
 In many places;—some has been up-  
 stirr'd  
 From out its crystal dwelling in a lake,  
 By a swan's ebon bill; from a thick  
 brake,

Nested and quiet in a valley mild,  
 Bubbles a pipe; fine sounds are floating  
 wild  
 About the earth: happy are ye and glad.

These things are doubtless: yet in truth  
 we've had  
 Strange thunders from the potency of  
 song;  
 Mingled indeed with what is sweet and  
 strong,  
 From majesty: but in clear truth the  
 themes  
 Are ugly clubs, the Poets Polyphemes  
 Disturbing the grand sea. A drainless  
 shower  
 Of light is poesy; 'tis the supreme of  
 power;  
 'Tis might half slumb'ring on its own  
 right arm.  
 The very archings of her eye-lids charm  
 A thousand willing agents to obey,  
 And still she governs with the mildest  
 sway:  
 But strength alone though of the Muses  
 born  
 Is like a fallen angel: trees upturn,  
 Darkness, and worms, and shrouds, and  
 sepulchres  
 Delight it; for it feeds upon the burrs  
 And thorns of life; forgetting the great  
 end  
 Of poesy, that it should be a friend  
 To soothe the cares, and lift the thoughts  
 of man.

Yet I rejoice: a myrtle fairer than  
 E'er grew in Paphos, from the bitter weeds  
 Lifts its sweet head into the air, and feeds  
 A silent space with ever sprouting green.  
 All tenderest birds there find a pleasant  
 screen,  
 Creep through the shade with jaunty  
 fluttering,  
 Nibble the little cupped flowers and sing.  
 Then let us clear away the choking thorns  
 From round its gentle stem; let the  
 young fawns,  
 Yeaned in after times, when we are flown,  
 Find a fresh sward beneath it, overgrown  
 With simple flowers: let there nothing be  
 More boisterous than a lover's bended  
 knee;  
 Nought more ungentle than the placid  
 look  
 Of one who leans upon a closed book;

Nought more untranquil than the grassy  
slopes  
Between two hills. All hail delightful  
hopes!

As she was wont, th' imagination  
Into most lovely labyrinths will be gone,  
And they shall be accounted poet kings  
Who simply tell the most heart-easing  
things.

O may these joys be ripe before I die.

Will not some say that I presumptuously  
Have spoken? that from hastening dis-  
grace

'Twere better far to hide my foolish face?  
That whining boyhood should with rever-  
ence bow

Ere the dread thunderbolt could reach?  
How!

If I do hide myself, it sure shall be  
In the very fane, the light of Poesy:  
If I do fall, at least I will be laid  
Beneath the silence of a poplar shade;  
And over me the grass shall be smooth  
shaven;  
And there shall be a kind memorial  
graven.

But off Despondence! miserable bane!  
They should not know thee, who athirst  
to gain

A noble end, are thirsty every hour.  
What though I am not wealthy in the  
dower

Of spanning wisdom; though I do not  
know

The shiftings of the mighty winds that  
blow

Hither and thither all the changing  
thoughts

Of man: though no great minist'ring  
reason sorts

Out the dark mysteries of human souls  
To clear conceiving: yet there ever rolls  
A vast idea before me, and I glean  
Therefrom my liberty; thence too I've  
seen

The end and aim of Poesy. 'Tis clear  
As anything most true; as that the year  
Is made of the four seasons—manifest  
As a large cross, some old cathedral's crest,  
Lifted to the white clouds. Therefore  
should I

Be but the essence of deformity,  
A coward, did my very eye-lids wink  
At speaking out what I have dared to  
think.

Ah! rather let me like a madman run  
Over some precipice; let the hot sun  
Melt my Dedalian wings, and drive me  
down

Convuls'd and headlong! Stay! an in-  
ward frown

Of conscience bids me be more calm  
awhile.

An ocean dim, sprinkled with many an  
isle,

Spreads awfully before me. How much  
toil!

How many days! what desperate tur-  
moil!

Ere I can have explored its widenesses.  
Ah, what a task! upon my bended  
knees,

I could unsay those — no, impossible!  
Impossible!

For sweet relief I'll dwell  
On humbler thoughts, and let this strange  
essay

Begun in gentleness die so away.  
E'en now all tumult from my bosom  
fades:

I turn full hearted to the friendly aids  
That smooth the path of honor; brother-  
hood,  
And friendliness the nurse of mutual  
good.

The hearty grasp that sends a pleasant  
sonnet

Into the brain ere one can think upon it;  
The silence when some rhymes are com-  
ing out;

And when they're come, the very pleasant  
rout:

The message certain to be done tomor-  
row.

'Tis perhaps as well that it should be to  
borrow

Some precious book from out its snug  
retreat,

To cluster round it when we next shall  
meet.

Scarce can I scribble on; for lovely airs  
Are fluttering round the room like doves  
in pairs;

Many delights of that glad day recalling,  
When first my senses caught their tender  
falling.

And with these airs come forms of ele-  
gance

Stooping their shoulders o'er a horse's  
prance,



Careless, and grand — fingers soft and  
 round  
 Parting luxuriant curls; — and the swift  
 bound  
 Of Bacchus from his chariot, when his  
 eye  
 Made Ariadne's cheek look blushing.  
 Thus I remember all the pleasant flow  
 Of words at opening a portfolio.

Things such as these are ever harbingers  
 To trains of peaceful images: the stirs  
 Of a swan's neck unseen among the  
 rushes:

A linnet starting all about the bushes:  
 A butterfly, with golden wings broad  
 parted

Nestling a rose, convuls'd as though it  
 smarted

With over pleasure — many, many more,  
 Might I indulge at large in all my store  
 Of luxuries: yet I must not forget  
 Sleep, quiet, with his poppy coronet:  
 For what there may be worthy in these  
 rhymes

I partly owe to him: and thus, the chimes  
 Of friendly voices had just given place  
 To as sweet a silence, when I 'gan retrace  
 The pleasant day, upon a couch at ease.  
 It was a poet's house <sup>1</sup> who keeps the keys  
 Of pleasure's temple. Round about were  
 hung

The glorious features of the bards who  
 sung

In other ages — cold and sacred busts  
 Smiled at each other. Happy he who  
 trusts

To clear Futurity his darling fame!  
 Then there were fauns and satyrs taking  
 aim

At swelling apples with a frisky leap  
 And reaching fingers, 'mid a luscious  
 heap

Of vine leaves. Then there rose to view a  
 fane

Of liny marble, and thereto a train  
 Of nymphs approaching fairly o'er the  
 sward:

One, loveliest, holding her white hand  
 toward

The dazzling sun-rise: two sisters sweet  
 Bending their graceful figures till they  
 meet

<sup>1</sup> Leigh Hunt's. The following lines are a description of the room in which the poem was written, with its decorations.

Over the trippings of a little child:  
 And some are hearing, eagerly, the wild  
 Thrilling liquidity of dewy piping.  
 See, in another picture, nymphs are  
 wiping

Cherishingly Diana's timorous limbs; —  
 A fold of lawny mantle dabbling swims  
 At the bath's edge, and keeps a gentle  
 motion

With the subsiding crystal: as when  
 ocean

Heaves calmly its broad swelling smooth-  
 ness o'er

Its rocky marge, and balances once more  
 The patient weeds; that now unshent by  
 foam

Feel all about their undulating home.

Sappho's meek head was there half smil-  
 ing down

At nothing; just as though the earnest  
 frown

Of over thinking had that moment gone  
 From off her brow, and left her all alone.

Great Alfred's too, with anxious, pitying  
 eyes,

As if he always listened to the sighs  
 Of the goaded world; and Kosciusko's  
 worn

By horrid suffrance — mightily forlorn.

Petrarch, outstepping from the shady  
 green,

Starts at the sight of Laura; nor can wean  
 His eyes from her sweet face. Most  
 happy they!

For over them was seen a free display  
 Of out-spread wings, and from between  
 them shone

The face of Poesy: from off her throne  
 She overlook'd things that I scarce could  
 tell.

The very sense of where I was might well  
 Keep Sleep aloof: but more than that  
 there came

Thought after thought to nourish up the  
 flame

Within my breast; so that the morning  
 light

Surprised me even from a sleepless night;  
 And up I rose refresh'd, and glad, and gay,  
 Resolving to begin that very day  
 These lines; and howsoever they be done,  
 I leave them as a father does his son.

? 1816. 1817.

### AFTER DARK VAPORS HAVE OPPRESSED OUR PLAINS

AFTER dark vapors have oppress'd our  
plains

For a long dreary season, comes a day  
Born of the gentle South, and clears away  
From the sick heavens all unseemly  
stains.

The anxious month, relieved from its  
pains,

Takes as a long-lost right the feel of May,  
The eyelids with the passing coolness  
play,

Like rose leaves with the drip of summer  
rains.

And calmest thoughts come round us —  
as, of leaves

Budding — fruit ripening in stillness —  
autumn suns

Smiling at eve upon the quiet sheaves, —  
Sweet Sappho's cheek — a sleeping in-  
fant's breath —

The gradual sand that through an hour-  
glass runs —

A woodland rivulet — a Poet's death.

*January, 1817. February 23, 1817.*

### TO LEIGH HUNT, ESQ.<sup>1</sup>

GLORY and loveliness have passed away;  
For if we wander out in early morn,

No wreathed incense do we see up-borne  
Into the east, to meet the smiling day:

No crowd of nymphs soft voic'd and  
young, and gay,

In woven baskets bringing ears of corn,  
Roses, and pinks, and violets, to adorn

The shrine of Flora in her early May.  
But there are left delights as high as these,

And I shall ever bless my destiny,  
That in a time, when under pleasant  
trees

Pan is no longer sought, I feel a free  
A leafy luxury, seeing I could please

With these poor offerings, a man like  
thee.

*1817. 1817.*

### ON SEEING THE ELGIN MARBLES

My spirit is too weak — mortality  
Weighs heavily on me like unwilling sleep,

And each imagin'd pinnacle and steep

Of godlike hardship tells me I must die  
Like a sick Eagle looking at the sky.

Yet 'tis a gentle luxury to weep  
That I have not the cloudy winds to keep,  
Fresh for the opening of the morning's  
eye.

Such dim-conceived glories of the brain  
Bring round the heart an undescribable  
feud;

So do these wonders a most dizzy pain,  
That mingles Grecian grandeur with the  
rude

Wasting of old Time — with a billowy  
main —

A sun — a shadow of a magnitude.

*1817. March 9, 1817.*

### ON A PICTURE OF LEANDER

COME hither all sweet maidens soberly,  
Down-looking aye, and with a chasten'd  
light

Hid in the fringes of your eyelids white,  
And meekly let your fair hands joined be,

As if so gentle that ye could not see,  
Untouched, a victim of your beauty  
bright,

Sinking away to his young spirit's night,  
Sinking bewildered 'mid the dreary sea:

'Tis young Leander toiling to his death;  
Nigh swooning, he doth purse his weary  
lips

For Hero's cheek, and smiles against her  
smile.

O horrid dream! see how his body dips  
Dead-heavy; arms and shoulders gleam  
awhile:

He's gone; up bubbles all his amorous  
breath!

*? . . . 1829.*

### ON THE SEA

It keeps eternal whisperings around  
Desolate shores, and with its mighty swell

Gluts twice ten thousand caverns, till the  
spell

Of Hecate leaves them their old shadowy  
sound.

Often 'tis in such gentle temper found,  
That scarcely will the very smallest shell

Be moved for days from whence it some-  
time fell,

When last the winds of heaven were un-  
bound.

<sup>1</sup> Dedication of the volume of 1817.

Oh ye! who have your 'eye-balls vexed  
 and tired,  
 Feast them upon the wideness of the Sea;  
 Oh ye! whose ears are dinned with up-  
 roar rude,  
 Or fed too much with cloying melody, —  
 Sit ye near some old cavern's mouth, and  
 brood  
 Until ye start, as if the sea-nymphs  
 quir'd! *August, 1817.* 1848.

### WHEN I HAVE FEARS THAT I MAY CEASE TO BE

WHEN I have fears that I may cease to be  
 Before my pen has glean'd my teeming  
 brain,  
 Before high piled books, in charact'ry,  
 Hold like rich garners the full-ripen'd  
 grain;  
 When I behold, upon the night's starr'd  
 face,  
 Huge cloudy symbols of a high romance,  
 And think that I may never live to trace  
 Their shadows, with the magic hand of  
 chance;  
 And when I feel, fair creature of an hour!  
 That I shall never look upon thee more,  
 Never have relish in the faery power  
 Of unreflecting love!—then on the  
 shore  
 Of the wide world I stand alone, and think  
 Till Love and Fame to nothingness do  
 sink. *1817.* 1848.

### FROM ENDYMION

#### FROM BOOK I

##### PROEM

A THING of beauty is a joy for ever:  
 Its loveliness increases; it will never  
 Pass into nothingness; but still will keep  
 A bower quiet for us, and a sleep  
 Full of sweet dreams, and health, and  
 quiet breathing.  
 Therefore, on every morrow, are we  
 wreathing  
 A flowery band to bind us to the earth.  
 Spite of despondence, of the inhuman  
 dearth  
 Of noble natures, of the gloomy days,  
 Of all the unhealthy and o'er-darkened  
 ways

Made for our searching: yes, in spite of  
 all,  
 Some shape of beauty moves away the  
 pall  
 From our dark spirits. Such the sun, the  
 moon,  
 Trees old and young, sprouting a shady  
 boon  
 For simple sheep; and such are daffodils  
 With the green world they live in; and  
 clear rills  
 That for themselves a cooling covert make  
 'Gainst the hot season; the mid-forest  
 brake,  
 Rich with a sprinkling of fair musk-rose  
 blooms:  
 And such too is the grandeur of the dooms  
 We have imagined for the mighty dead;  
 All lovely tales that we have heard or  
 read:  
 An endless fountain of immortal drink,  
 Pouring unto us from the heaven's brink.

Nor do we merely feel these essences  
 For one short hour; no, even as the trees  
 That whisper round a temple become  
 soon  
 Dear as the temple's self, so does the  
 moon,  
 The passion poesy, glories infinite,  
 Haunt us till they become a cheering light  
 Unto our souls, and bound to us so fast,  
 That, whether there be shine, or gloom  
 o'ercast,  
 They always must be with us, or we die.

Therefore, 'tis with full happiness  
 that I

Will trace the story of Endymion.  
 The very music of the name has gone  
 Into my being, and each pleasant scene  
 Is growing fresh before me as the green  
 Of our own valleys: so I will begin  
 Now while I cannot hear the city's din;  
 Now while the early budders are just  
 new,  
 And run in mazes of the youngest hue  
 About old forests; while the willow trails  
 Its delicate amber; and the dairy pails  
 Bring home increase of milk. And, as  
 the year  
 Grows lush in juicy stalks, I'll smoothly  
 steer  
 My little boat, for many quiet hours,  
 With streams that deepen freshly into  
 bowers.

Many and many a verse I hope to write,  
 Before the daisies, vermeil rimm'd and  
     white,  
 Hide in deep herbage; and ere yet the  
     bees  
 Hum about globes of clover and sweet  
     peas,  
 I must be near the middle of my story.  
 O may no wintry season, bare and hoary,  
 See it half finished: but let Autumn bold,  
 With universal tinge of sober gold,  
 Be all about me when I make an end.  
 And now at once, adventuresome, I send  
 My herald thought into a wilderness:  
 There let its trumpet blow, and quickly  
     dress  
 My uncertain path with green, that I  
     may speed  
 Easily onward, through flowers and weed.

## HYMN TO PAN

O THOU, whose mighty palace roof  
     doth hang  
 From jagged trunks, and overshadoweth  
 Eternal whispers, glooms, the birth, life,  
     death  
 Of unseen flowers in heavy peacefulness;  
 Who lov'st to see the hamadryads dress  
 Their ruffled locks where meeting hazels  
     darken;  
 And through whole solemn hours dost sit,  
     and hearken  
 The dreary melody of bedded reeds —  
 In desolate places, where dank moisture  
     breeds  
 The pipy hemlock to strange overgrowth;  
 Bethinking thee, how melancholy loth  
 Thou wast to lose fair Syrinx — do thou  
     now,  
 By thy love's milky brow!  
 By all the trembling mazes that she ran,  
 Hear us, great Pan!

O thou, for whose soul-soothing quiet,  
     turtles  
 Passion their voices cooingly 'mong  
     myrtles,  
 What time thou wanderest at eventide  
 Through sunny meadows, that outskirt  
     the side  
 Of thine enmossed realms: O thou, to  
     whom  
 Broad leaved fig trees even now foredoom  
 Their ripen'd fruitage; yellow girted bees  
 Their golden honeycombs; our village leas

Their fairest-blossom'd beans and pop-  
     pied corn;  
 The chuckling linnet its five young un-  
     born,  
 To sing for thee; low creeping straw-  
     berries  
 Their summer coolness; pent up butter-  
     flies  
 Their freckled wings; yea, the fresh  
     budding year  
 All its completions — be quickly near,  
 By every wind that nods the mountain  
     pine,  
 O forester divine!

Thou, to whom every faun and satyr  
     flies  
 For willing service; whether to surprise  
 The squatted hare while in half sleeping  
     fit;  
 Or upward ragged precipices flit  
 To save poor lambkins from the eagle's  
     maw;  
 Or by mysterious enticement draw  
 Bewildered shepherds to their path again;  
 Or to tread breathless round the frothy  
     main,  
 And gathered up all fancifullest shells  
 For thee to tumble into Naiads' cells,  
 And, being hidden, laugh at their out-  
     peeping;  
 Or to delight thee with fantastic leaping,  
 The while they pelt each other on the  
     crown  
 With silvery oak apples, and fir cones  
     brown —  
 By all the echoes that about thee ring,  
 Hear us, O satyr king!

O Harkener to the loud clapping  
     shears,  
 While ever and anon to his shorn peers  
 A ram goes bleating: Winder of the horn,  
 When snouted wild-boars routing tender  
     corn  
 Anger our huntsman: Breather round our  
     farms,  
 To keep off mildews, and all weather  
     harms:  
 Strange ministrant of undescribed sounds,  
 That come a swooning over hollow  
     grounds,  
 And wither drearily on barren moors:  
 Dread opener of the mysterious doors  
 Leading to universal knowledge — see,  
 Great son of Dryope,



The many that are come to pay their  
vows  
With leaves about their brows!

Be still the unimaginable lodge  
For solitary thinkings; such as dodge  
Conception to the very bourne of heaven,  
Then leave the naked brain: be still the  
leaven,  
That spreading in this dull and clodded  
earth  
Gives it a touch ethereal — a new birth:  
Be still a symbol of immensity;  
A firmament reflected in a sea;  
An element filling the space between;  
An unknown — but no more: we humbly  
screen  
With uplift hands our foreheads, lowly  
bending,  
And giving out a shout most heaven-  
rending,  
Conjure thee to receive our humble Pæan,  
Upon thy Mount Lycean!

#### THE COMING OF DIAN

[*Endymion speaks, to his Sister Peona.*]

"THIS river does not see the naked sky,  
Till it begins to progress silverly  
Around the western border of the wood,  
Whence, from a certain spot, its winding  
flood  
Seems at the distance like a crescent  
moon;  
And in that nook, the very pride of June,  
Had I been used to pass my weary eves;  
There rather for the sun unwilling leaves  
So dear a picture of his sovereign power,  
And I could witness his most kingly hour,  
When he doth lighten up the golden reins,  
And paces leisurely down amber plains  
His snorting four. Now when his chariot  
last  
Its beams against the zodiac-lion cast,  
There blossom'd suddenly a magic bed  
Of sacred ditamy, and poppies red:  
At which I wondered greatly, knowing well  
That but one night had wrought this  
flowery spell;  
And, sitting down close by, began to  
muse  
What it might mean. Perhaps, thought  
I, Morpheus,  
In passing here, his owlet pinions shook;  
Or, it may be, ere matron Night uptook

Her ebon urn, young Mercury, by stealth,  
Had dipt his rod in it: such garland  
wealth

Came not by common growth. Thus on  
I thought,

Until my head was dizzy and distraught.  
Moreover, through the dancing poppies  
stole

A breeze, most softly lulling to my soul;  
And shaping visions all about my sight  
Of colors, wings, and bursts of spangly  
light;

The which became more strange, and  
strange, and dim,

And then were gulf'd in a tumultuous  
swim:

And then I fell asleep. Ah, can I tell  
The enchantment that afterwards befell?  
Yet it was but a dream: yet such a dream  
That never tongue, although it overteem  
With mellow utterance, like a cavern  
spring,

Could figure out and to conception bring  
All I beheld and felt. Methought I lay  
Watching the zenith, where the milky  
way

Among the stars in virgin splendor pours;  
And travelling my eye, until the doors  
Of heaven appeared to open for my flight,  
I became loth and fearful to alight  
From such high soaring by a downward  
glance:

So kept me steadfast in that airy trance,  
Spreading imaginary pinions wide.

When, presently, the stars began to glide,  
And faint away, before my eager view:  
At which I sigh'd that I could not pursue,  
And dropped my vision to the horizon's  
verge;

And lo! from opening clouds, I saw  
emerge

The loveliest moon, that ever silver'd o'er  
A shell for Neptune's goblet: she did soar  
So passionately bright, my dazzled soul  
Commingling with her argent spheres did  
roll

Through clear and cloudy, even when she  
went

At last into a dark and vapory tent —  
Whereat, methought, the lidless-eyed  
train

Of planets all were in the blue again.  
To commune with those orbs, once more  
I rais'd

My sight right upward: but it was quite  
dazed



By a bright something, sailing down  
 apace,  
 Making me quickly veil my eyes and  
 face:  
 Again I look'd, and, O ye deities,  
 Who from Olympus watch our destinies!  
 Whence that completed form of all com-  
 pleteness?  
 Whence came that high perfection of all  
 sweetness?  
 Speak, stubborn earth, and tell me where,  
 O where  
 Hast thou a symbol of her golden hair?  
 Not oat-sheaves drooping in the western  
 sun;  
 Not — thy soft hand, fair sister! let me  
 shun  
 Such folly before thee — yet she had,  
 Indeed, locks bright enough to make me  
 mad;  
 And they were simply gordian'd up and  
 braided,  
 Leaving, in naked comeliness, unshaded,  
 Her pearl round ears, white neck, and  
 orb'd brow;  
 The which were blended in, I know not  
 how,  
 With such a paradise of lips and eyes,  
 Blush-tinted cheeks, half smiles, and  
 faintest sighs,  
 That, when I think thereon, my spirit  
 clings  
 And plays about its fancy, till the stings  
 Of human neighborhood envenom all.  
 Unto what awful power shall I call?  
 To what high fane? — Ah! see her hover-  
 ing feet,  
 More bluely vein'd, more soft, more  
 whitely sweet  
 Than those of sea-born Venus, when she  
 rose  
 From out her cradle shell. The wind  
 out-blows  
 Her scarf into a fluttering pavilion;  
 'Tis blue, and over-spangled with a mil-  
 lion  
 Of little eyes, as though thou wert to  
 shed,  
 Over the darkest, lushest blue-bell bed,  
 Handfuls of daisies." — "Endymion, how  
 strange!  
 Dream within dream!" — "She took an  
 airy range,  
 And then, towards me, like a very maid,  
 Came blushing, waning, willing, and  
 afraid,

And press'd me by the hand: Ah! 'twas  
 too much;  
 Methought I fainted at the charmed  
 touch,  
 Yet held my recollection, even as one  
 Who dives three fathoms where the  
 waters run  
 Gurgling in beds of coral: for anon,  
 I felt upmounted in that region  
 Where falling stars dart their artillery  
 forth,  
 And eagles struggle with the buffeting  
 north  
 That balances the heavy meteor-stone; —  
 Felt too, I was not fearful, nor alone,  
 But lapp'd and lull'd along the dangerous  
 sky.  
 Soon, as it seem'd, we left our journeying  
 high,  
 And straightway into frightful eddies  
 swoop'd;  
 Such as aye muster where gray time has  
 scoop'd  
 Huge dens and caverns in a mountain's  
 side:  
 Their hollow sounds arous'd me, and I  
 sigh'd  
 To faint once more by looking on my  
 bliss —  
 I was distracted; madly did I kiss  
 The wooing arms which held me, and did  
 give  
 My eyes at once to death: but 'twas to  
 live,  
 To take in draughts of life from the gold  
 fount  
 Of kind and passionate looks; to count,  
 and count  
 The moments, by some greedy help that  
 seem'd  
 A second self, that each might be re-  
 deem'd  
 And plunder'd of its load of blessedness.  
 Ah, desperate mortal! I ev'n dar'd to press  
 Her very cheek against my crowned lip,  
 And, at that moment, felt my body dip  
 Into a warmer air; a moment more,  
 Our feet were soft in flowers. There was  
 store  
 Of newest joys upon that alp. Sometimes  
 A scent of violets, and blossoming limes,  
 Loiter'd around us; then of honey cells,  
 Made delicate from all white-flower bells;  
 And once, above the edges of our nest,  
 An arch face peep'd, — an Oread as I  
 guess'd.

"Why did I dream that sleep o'er-  
 power'd me  
 In midst of all this heaven? Why not see,  
 Far off, the shadows of his pinions dark,  
 And stare them from me? But no, like a  
 spark  
 That needs must die, although its little  
 beam  
 Reflects upon a diamond, my sweet dream  
 Fell into nothing — into stupid sleep.  
 And so it was, until a gentle creep,  
 A careful moving caught my waking ears,  
 And up I started: Ah! my sighs, my  
 tears,  
 My clenched hands; — for lo! the poppies  
 hung  
 Dew-dabbled on their stalks, the ouzel  
 sung  
 A heavy ditty, and the sullen day  
 Had chidden herald Hesperus away,  
 With leaden looks: the solitary breeze  
 Bluster'd, and slept, and its wild self did  
 tease  
 With wayward melancholy; and I  
 thought,  
 Mark me, Peona! that sometimes it  
 brought,  
 Faint fare-thee-wells, and sigh-shrilled  
 adieus! —  
 Away I wander'd — all the pleasant hues  
 Of heaven and earth had faded: deepest  
 shades  
 Were deepest dungeons; heaths and  
 sunny glades  
 Were full of pestilent light; our taintless  
 rills  
 Seem'd sooty, and o'er-spread with up-  
 turn'd gills  
 Of dying fish; the vermeil rose had blown  
 In frightful scarlet, and its thorns out-  
 grown  
 Likes piked aloe. If an innocent bird  
 Before my heedless footsteps stirr'd, and  
 stirr'd  
 In little journeys, I beheld in it  
 A disguis'd demon, missioned to knit  
 My soul with under darkness; to entice  
 My stumblings down some monstrous  
 precipice:  
 Therefore I eager followed, and did curse  
 The disappointment. Time, that aged  
 nurse,  
 Rock'd me to patience. Now, thank  
 gentle heaven!  
 These things, with all their comfortings,  
 are given

To my down-sunken hours, and with thee,  
 Sweet sister, help to stem the ebbing sea  
 Of weary life."

## FROM BOOK II

## INVOCATION TO THE POWER OF LOVE

O SOVEREIGN power of love! O grief!  
 O balm!  
 All records, saving thine, come cool, and  
 calm,  
 And shadowy, through the mist of passed  
 years:  
 For others, good or bad, hatred and tears  
 Have become indolent; but touching  
 thine,  
 One sigh doth echo, one poor sob doth  
 pine,  
 One kiss brings honey-dew from buried  
 days.  
 The woes of Troy, towers smothering  
 o'er their blaze,  
 Stiff-holden shields, far-piercing spears,  
 keen blades,  
 Struggling, and blood, and shrieks — all  
 dimly fades  
 Into some backward corner of the brain;  
 Yet, in our very souls, we feel amain  
 The close of Troilus and Cressid sweet.  
 Hence, pageant history! hence, gilded  
 cheat!  
 Swart planet in the universe of deeds!  
 Wide sea, that one continuous murmur  
 breeds  
 Along the pebbled shore of memory!  
 Many old rotten-timber'd boats there be  
 Upon thy vaporious bosom, magnified  
 To goodly vessels; many a sail of pride,  
 And golden keel'd, is left unlaunch'd and  
 dry.  
 But wherefore this? What care, though  
 owl did fly  
 About the great Athenian admiral's mast?  
 What care, though striding Alexander past  
 The Indus with his Macedonian num-  
 bers?  
 Though old Ulysses tortured from his  
 slumbers  
 The gluttled Cyclops, what care? — Juliet  
 leaning  
 Amid her window-flowers, — sighing, —  
 weaning  
 Tenderly her fancy from its maiden snow,  
 Doth more avail than these: the silver  
 flow

Of Hero's tears, the swoon of Imogen,  
 Fair Pastorella in the bandit's den,  
 Are things to brood on with more ardency  
 Than the death-day of empires. Fear-  
     fully  
 Must such conviction come upon his  
     head,  
 Who, thus far, discontent, has dared to  
     tread,  
 Without one muse's smile, or kind be-  
     hest,  
 The path of love and poesy. But rest,  
 In chafing restlessness, is yet more drear  
 Than to be crush'd, in striving to uprear  
 Love's standard on the battlements of  
     song.  
 So once more days and nights aid me  
     along,  
 Like legion'd soldiers.

## FROM BOOK IV

## ROUNDELAY

"O SORROW,  
 Why dost borrow  
 The natural hue of health, from vermeil  
     lips?  
 To give maiden blushes  
 To the white rose bushes?  
 Or is it thy dewy hand the daisy tips?

"O Sorrow,  
 Why dost borrow  
 The lustrous passion from a falcon-eye?—  
 To give the glow-worm light?  
 Or, on a moonless night,  
 To tinge, on siren shores, the salt sea-  
     spray?

"O Sorrow,  
 Why dost borrow  
 The mellow ditties from a mourning  
     tongue? —  
 To give at evening pale  
 Unto the nightingale,  
 That thou mayst listen the cold dews  
     among?

"O Sorrow,  
 Why dost borrow  
 Heart's lightness from the merriment of  
     May? —  
 A lover would not tread  
 A cowslip on the head,

Though he should dance from eve till  
     peep of day —  
 Nor any drooping flower  
 Held sacred for thy bower,  
 Wherever he may sport himself and play.

"To Sorrow,  
 I bade good-morrow,  
 And thought to leave her far away be-  
     hind;  
 But cheerly, cheerly,  
 She loves me dearly;  
 She is so constant to me, and so kind:  
 I would deceive her  
 And so leave her,  
 But ah! she is so constant and so kind.

"Beneath my palm trees, by the river  
     side,  
 I sat a-weeping: in the whole world wide  
 There was no one to ask me why I wept,—  
 And so I kept  
 Brimming the water-lily cups with tears  
 Cold as my fears.

"Beneath my palm trees, by the river  
     side,  
 I sat a-weeping: what enamor'd bride,  
 Cheated by shadowy wooer from the  
     clouds,  
 But hides and shrouds  
 Beneath dark palm trees by a river side?

"And as I sat, over the light blue hills  
 There came a noise of revellers: the rills  
 Into the wide stream came of purple  
     hue —  
 'Twas Bacchus and his crew!  
 The earnest trumpet spake, and silver  
     thrills  
 From kissing cymbals made a merry  
     din —  
 'Twas Bacchus and his kin!  
 Like to a moving vintage down they  
     came,  
 Crown'd with green leaves, and faces all  
     on flame;  
 All madly dancing through the pleasant  
     valley,  
 To scare thee, Melancholy!  
 O then, O then, thou wast a simple name!  
 And I forgot thee, as the berried holly  
 By shepherds is forgotten, when, in June,  
 Tall chestnuts keep away the sun and  
     moon: —  
 I rush'd into the folly!

"Within his car, aloft, young Bacchus stood,  
 Trifling his ivy-dart, in dancing mood,  
     With sidelong laughing;  
 And little rills of crimson wine imbrued  
 His plump white arms, and shoulders,  
     enough white  
     For Venus' pearly bite;  
 And near him rode Silenus on his ass,  
 Pelted with flowers as he on did pass  
     Tipsily quaffing.

"Whence came ye, merry Damsels!  
     whence came ye!  
 So many, and so many, and such glee?  
 Why have ye left your bowers desolate,  
     Your lutes, and gentler fate? —  
 'We follow Bacchus! Bacchus on the wing,  
     A conquering!  
 Bacchus, young Bacchus! good or ill be-tide,  
 We dance before him thorough kingdoms wide: —  
 Come hither, lady fair, and joined be  
     To our wild minstrelsy!'

"Whence came ye, jolly Satyrs! whence came ye!  
 So many, and so many, and such glee?  
 Why have ye left your forest haunts,  
     why left  
     Your nuts in oak-tree cleft? —  
 'For wine, for wine we left our kernel tree;  
 For wine we left our heath, and yellow brooms,  
     And cold mushrooms;  
 For wine we follow Bacchus through the earth;  
 Great God of breathless cups and chirping mirth! —  
 Come hither, lady fair, and joined be  
     To our mad minstrelsy!'

"Over wide streams and mountains great we went,  
 And, save when Bacchus kept his ivy tent,  
 Onward the tiger and the leopard pants,  
     With Asian elephants:  
 Onward these myriads — with song and dance,  
 With zebras striped, and sleek Arabians' prance,  
 Web-footed alligators, crocodiles,  
 Bearing upon their scaly backs, in files,

Plump infant laughers mimicking the coil  
 Of seamen, and stout galley-rower's toil:  
 With toying oars and silken sails they glide,  
     Nor care for wind and tide.

"Mounted on panthers' furs and lions' manes,  
 From rear to van they scour about the plains;  
 A three days' journey in a moment done:  
 And always, at the rising of the sun,  
 About the wilds they hunt with spear and horn,  
     On spleenful unicorn.

"I saw Osirian Egypt kneel adown  
     Before the vine-wreath crown!  
 I saw parch'd Abyssinia rouse and sing  
     To the silver cymbals' ring!  
 I saw the whelming vintage hotly pierce  
     Old Tartary the fierce!  
 The kings of Inde their jewel-sceptres vail,  
 And from their treasures scatter pearled hail;  
 Great Brahma from his mystic heaven groans,  
     And all his priesthood moans,  
 Before young Bacchus' eye-wink turning pale. —  
 Into these regions came I following him,  
 Sick-hearted, weary — so I took a whim  
 To stray away into these forests drear  
     Alone, without a peer:  
 And I have told thee all thou mayest hear.

"Young stranger!  
 I've been a ranger  
 In search of pleasure throughout every clime:  
     Alas! 'tis not for me!  
     Bewitch'd I sure must be,  
 To lose in grieving all my maiden prime.

"Come then, Sorrow!  
 Sweetest Sorrow!  
 Like an own babe I nurse thee on my breast:  
     I thought to leave thee  
     And deceive thee,  
 But now of all the world I love thee best.

"There is not one,  
 No, no, not one

But thee to comfort a poor lonely maid;  
 Thou art her mother,  
 And her brother,  
 Her playmate, and her wooer in the  
 shade."

## THE FEAST OF DIAN

WHO, who from Dian's feast would be  
 away?

For all the golden bowers of the day  
 Are empty left? Who, who away would  
 be

From Cynthia's wedding and festivity?  
 Not Hesperus: lo! upon his silver wings  
 He leans away for highest heaven sings,  
 Snapping his lucid fingers merrily!—  
 Ah, Zephyrus! art here, and Flora too!  
 Ye tender bibbers of the rain and dew,  
 Young playmates of the rose and daffodil,  
 Be careful, ere ye enter in, to fill

Your baskets high

With fennel green, and balm, and golden  
 pines,

Savory, latter-mint, and columbines,  
 Cool parsley, basil sweet, and sunny  
 thyme;

Yea, every flower and leaf of every clime,  
 All gather'd in the dewy morning: hie

Away! fly, fly!—

Crystalline brother of the belt of heaven,  
 Aquarius! to whom king Jove has given  
 Two liquid pulse streams 'stead of  
 feather'd wings,

Two fan-like fountains, — thine illumin-  
 ings

For Dian play:

Dissolve the frozen purity of air;  
 Let thy white shoulders silvery and bare  
 Shew cold through watery pinions; make  
 more bright

The Star-Queen's crescent on her mar-  
 riage night:

Haste, haste away!—

Castor has tamed the planet Lion, see!  
 And of the Bear has Pollux mastery:  
 A third is in the race! who is the third,  
 Speeding away swift as the eagle bird?

The tramping Centaur!

The Lion's mane's on end: the Bear how  
 fierce!

The Centaur's arrow ready seems to  
 pierce

Some enemy: far forth his bow is bent  
 Into the blue of heaven. He'll be shent,  
 Pale unrelentor,

When he shall hear the wedding lutes a-  
 playing. —

Andromeda! sweet woman! why delaying  
 So timidly among the stars: come hither!  
 Join this bright throng, and nimbly fol-  
 low whither

They all are going.

Danae's Son, before Jove newly bow'd,  
 Has wept for thee, calling to Jove aloud.  
 Thee, gentle lady, did he disenthral:

Ye shall for ever live and love, for all  
 Thy tears are flowing.

1817. 1818.

## ROBIN HOOD

No! those days are gone away,  
 And their hours are old and gray,  
 And their minutes buried all  
 Under the down-trodden pall  
 Of the leaves of many years:  
 Many times have winter's shears,  
 Frozen North, and chilling East,  
 Sounded tempests to the feast  
 Of the forest's whispering fleeces,  
 Since men knew nor rent nor leases.

No, the bugle sounds no more,  
 And the twanging bow no more;  
 Silent is the ivory shrill  
 Past the heath and up the hill;  
 There is no mid-forest laugh,  
 Where lone Echo gives the half  
 To some wight, amaz'd to hear  
 Jest, deep in forest drear.

On the fairest time of June  
 You may go, with sun or moon,  
 Or the seven stars to light you,  
 Or the polar ray to right you;  
 But you never may behold  
 Little John, or Robin bold;  
 Never one, of all the clan,  
 Thrumming on an empty can  
 Some old hunting ditty, while  
 He doth his green way beguile  
 To fair hostess Merriment,  
 Down beside the pasture Trent;  
 For he left the merry tale  
 Messenger for spicy ale.

Gone, the merry Morris din;  
 Gone, the song of Gamelyn;  
 Gone, the tough-belted outlaw  
 Idling in the "grenè shawe;"



All are gone away and past!  
 And if Robin should be cast  
 Sudden from his turfed grave,  
 And if Marian should have  
 Once again her forest days,  
 She would weep, and he would craze:  
 He would swear, for all his oaks,  
 Fall'n beneath the dockyard strokes,  
 Have rotted on the briny seas;  
 She would weep that her wild bees  
 Sang not to her — strange! that honey  
 Can't be got without hard money!

So it is: yet let us sing,  
 Honor to the old bow-string!  
 Honor to the bugle-horn!  
 Honor to the woods unshorn!  
 Honor to the Lincoln green!  
 Honor to the archer keen!  
 Honor to tight Little John,  
 And the horse he rode upon!  
 Honor to bold Robin Hood,  
 Sleeping in the underwood!  
 Honor to Maid Marian,  
 And to all the Sherwood-clan!  
 Though their days have hurried by,  
 Let us two a burden try.  
*February 3, 1818. 1820.*

#### IN A DREAR-NIGHTED DECEMBER

In a drear-nighted December,  
 Too happy, happy tree,  
 Thy branches ne'er remember  
 Their green felicity:  
 The north cannot undo them,  
 With a sleety whistle through them;  
 Nor frozen thawings glue them  
 From budding at the prime.

In a drear-nighted December,  
 Too happy, happy brook,  
 Thy bubblings ne'er remember  
 Apollo's summer look;  
 But with a sweet forgetting,  
 They stay their crystal fretting,  
 Never, never petting  
 About the frozen time.

Ah! would 'twere so with many  
 A gentle girl and boy!  
 But were there ever any  
 Writhed not at passed joy?  
 To know the change and feel it,

When there is none to heal it,  
 Nor numbed sense to steal it,  
 Was never said in rhyme.  
*? 1818. 1829.*

#### TO AILSA ROCK

HEARKEN, thou craggy ocean pyramid!  
 Give answer from thy voice, the sea-  
     fowls' screams!  
 When were thy shoulders mantled in  
     huge streams?  
 When, from the sun, was thy broad fore-  
     head hid?  
 How long is't since the mighty power  
     bid  
 Thee heave to airy sleep from fathom  
     dreams?  
 Sleep in the lap of thunder or sunbeams,  
 Or when gray clouds are thy cold cover-  
     lid.  
 Thou answer'st not; for thou art dead  
     asleep;  
 Thy life is but two dead eternities —  
 The last in air, the former in the deep,  
 First with the whales, last with the eagle-  
     skies —  
 Drown'd wast thou till an earthquake  
     made thee steep,  
 Another cannot wake thy giant size.  
*July, 1818. 1819.*

#### THE HUMAN SEASONS

FOUR Seasons fill the measure of the  
     year;  
 There are four seasons in the mind of  
     man:  
 He has his lusty Spring, when fancy  
     clear  
 Takes in all beauty with an easy span:  
 He has his Summer, when luxuriously  
 Spring's honey'd cud of youthful thought  
     he loves  
 To ruminate, and by such dreaming high  
 Is nearest unto heaven: quiet coves  
 His soul has in its Autumn, when his  
     wings  
 He furleth close; contented so to look  
 On mists in idleness — to let fair things  
 Pass by unheeded as a threshold brook.  
 He has his Winter too of pale misfeature,  
 Or else he would forego his mortal nature.  
*? 1818. 1819.*

## TO HOMER

STANDING aloof in giant ignorance,  
Of thee I hear and of the Cyclades,  
As one who sits ashore and longs perchance  
To visit Dolphin-coral in deep seas.  
So thou wast blind; — but then the veil  
was rent,

For Jove uncurtained Heaven to let thee  
live,

And Neptune made for thee a spumy tent,  
And Pan made sing for thee his forest-hive.  
Aye, on the shores of darkness there is light,  
And precipices show untrodden green,  
There is a budding morrow in midnight,<sup>1</sup>  
There is a triple sight in blindness keen;  
Such seeing hadst thou, as it once befell  
To Dian, Queen of Earth, and Heaven,  
and Hell. 1818. 1848.

## LINES

ON

## THE MERMAID TAVERN

SOULS of Poets dead and gone,  
What Elysium have ye known,  
Happy field or mossy cavern,  
Choicer than the Mermaid Tavern?  
Have ye tippled drink more fine  
Than mine host's Canary wine?  
Or are fruits of Paradise  
Sweeter than those dainty pies  
Of venison? O generous food!  
Drest as though bold Robin Hood  
Would, with his maid Marian,  
Sup and bowse from horn and can.

I have heard that on a day  
Mine host's sign-board flew away,  
Nobody knew whither, till  
An astrologer's old quill  
To a sheepskin gave the story,  
Said he saw you in your glory,  
Underneath a new old sign  
Sipping beverage divine,  
And pledging with contented smack  
The Mermaid in the Zodiac.

Souls of Poets dead and gone,  
What Elysium have ye known,  
Happy field or mossy cavern,  
Choicer than the Mermaid Tavern?  
1818. 1820.

## FANCY

EVER let the Fancy roam,  
Pleasure never is at home:  
At a touch sweet Pleasure melteth,  
Like to bubbles when rain pelteth;  
Then let winged Fancy wander  
Through the thought still spread beyond  
her:

Open wide the mind's cage-door,  
She'll dart forth, and cloudward soar.  
O sweet Fancy! let her loose;  
Summer's joys are spoilt by use,  
And the enjoying of the Spring  
Fades as does its blossoming;  
Autumn's red-lipp'd fruitage too,  
Blushing through the mist and dew,  
Cloys with tasting: What do then?  
Sit thee by the ingle, when  
The sear fagot blazes bright,  
Spirit of a winter's night;  
When the soundless earth is muffled,  
And the caked snow is shuffled  
From the ploughboy's heavy shoon;  
When the Night doth meet the Noon  
In a dark conspiracy  
To banish Even from her sky.  
Sit thee there, and send abroad,  
With a mind self-overaw'd  
Fancy, high-commission'd: — send her!  
She has vassals to attend her:  
She will bring, in spite of frost,  
Beauties that the earth hath lost;  
She will bring thee, all together,  
All delights of summer weather;  
All the buds and bells of May,  
From dewy sward or thorny spray;  
All the heaped Autumn's wealth,  
With a still, mysterious stealth:  
She will mix these pleasures up  
Like three fit wines in a cup,  
And thou shalt quaff it: — thou shalt  
hear

Distant harvest-carols clear;  
Rustle of the reaped corn;  
Sweet birds antheming the morn:  
And, in the same moment — hark!  
'Tis the early April lark,  
Or the rooks, with busy caw,  
Foraging for sticks and straw.  
Thou shalt, at one glance, behold  
The daisy and the marigold;  
White-plum'd lilies, and the first  
Hedge-grown primrose that hath burst;  
Shaded hyacinth, alway  
Sapphire queen of the mid-May;

<sup>1</sup> Forman records in his notes that Rossetti considered this to be "Keats' finest single line of poetry." (Keats's *Works*, II. 238.)

And every leaf, and every flower  
 Pearled with the self-same shower.  
 Thou shalt see the field-mouse peep  
 Meagre from its celled sleep;  
 And the snake all winter-thin  
 Cast on sunny bank its skin;  
 Freckled nest-eggs thou shalt see  
 Hatching in the hawthorn-tree,  
 When the henbird's wing doth rest  
 Quiet on her mossy nest;  
 Then the hurry and alarm  
 When the bee-hive casts its swarm;  
 Acorns ripe down-pattering,  
 While the autumn breezes sing.

Oh, sweet Fancy! let her loose;  
 Every thing is spoilt by use:  
 Where's the cheek that doth not fade,  
 Too much gaz'd at? Where's the maid  
 Whose lip mature is ever new?  
 Where's the eye, however blue,  
 Doth not weary? Where's the face  
 One would meet in every place?  
 Where's the voice, however soft,  
 One would hear so very oft?  
 At a touch sweet Pleasure melteth  
 Like to bubbles when rain pelteth.  
 Let, then, winged Fancy find  
 Thee a mistress to thy mind:  
 Dulcet-eyed as Ceres' daughter,  
 Ere the God of Torment taught her  
 How to frown and how to chide;  
 With a waist and with a side  
 White as Hebe's, when her zone  
 Slipped its golden clasp, and down  
 Fell her kirtle to her feet,  
 While she held the goblet sweet,  
 And Jove grew languid.—Break the mesh  
 Of the Fancy's silken leash;  
 Quickly break her prison-string,  
 And such joys as these she'll bring.—  
 Let the winged Fancy roam,  
 Pleasure never is at home. 1818. 1820.

### ISABELLA

OR

THE POT OF BASIL

A STORY FROM BOCCACCIO

FAIR Isabel, poor simple Isabel!

Lorenzo, a young palmer in Love's eye!  
 They could not in the self-same mansion  
 dwell

Without some stir of heart, some  
 malady;

They could not sit at meals but feel how  
 well

It soothed each to be the other by;  
 They could not, sure, beneath the same  
 roof sleep  
 But to each other dream, and nightly  
 weep.

With every morn their love grew ten-  
 derer,

With every eve deeper and tenderer still;  
 He might not in house, field, or garden  
 stir,

But her full shape would all his seeing  
 fill;

And his continual voice was pleasanter  
 To her, than noise of trees or hidden  
 rill;

Her lute-string gave an echo of his name,  
 She spoilt her half-done broidery with  
 the same.

He knew whose gentle hand was at the  
 latch,

Before the door had given her to his  
 eyes;  
 And from her chamber-window he would  
 catch

Her beauty farther than the falcon  
 spies;  
 And constant as her vespers would he  
 watch,

Because her face was turn'd to the  
 same skies;  
 And with sick longing all the night out-  
 wear,  
 To hear her morning-step upon the stair.

A whole long month of May in this sad  
 plight

Made their cheeks paler by the break  
 of June:

"To-morrow will I bow to my delight,  
 To-morrow will I ask my lady's  
 boon."—

"O may I never see another night,  
 Lorenzo, if thy lips breathe not love's  
 tune."—

So spake they to the pillows; but, alas,  
 Honeyless days and days did he let pass;

Until sweet Isabella's untouch'd cheek

Fell sick within the rose's just domain,  
 Fell thin as a young mother's, who doth  
 seek

By every lull to cool her infant's pain:

"How ill she is," said he, "I may not  
 speak,  
 And yet I will, and tell my love all  
 plain :  
 If looks speak love-laws, I will drink her  
 tears,  
 And at the least 'twill startle off her  
 cares."

So said he one fair morning, and all day  
 His heart beat awfully against his  
 side ;  
 And to his heart he inwardly did pray  
 For power to speak ; but still the ruddy  
 tide  
 Stifled his voice, and puls'd resolve  
 away —  
 Fever'd his high conceit of such a  
 bride,  
 Yet brought him to the meekness of a  
 child :  
 Alas ! when passion is both meek and  
 wild !

So once more he had wak'd and anguished  
 A dreary night of love and misery,  
 If Isabel's quick eye had not been wed  
 To every symbol on his forehead high ;  
 She saw it waxing very pale and dead,  
 And straight all flush'd ; so, lisped  
 tenderly,  
 "Lorenzo !" — here she ceas'd her timid  
 quest,  
 But in her tone and look he read the rest.

"O Isabella, I can half perceive  
 That I may speak my grief into thine  
 ear ;  
 If thou didst ever anything believe,  
 Believe how I love thee, believe how  
 near  
 My soul is to its doom : I would not  
 grieve  
 Thy hand by unwelcome pressing,  
 would not fear  
 Thine eyes by gazing ; but I cannot live  
 Another night, and not my passion shrive.

"Love ! thou art leading me from wintry  
 cold,<sup>1</sup>  
 Lady ! thou ledest me to summer  
 clime,  
 And I must taste the blossoms that  
 unfold  
 In its ripe warmth this gracious morn-  
 ing time."

So said, his erewhile timid lips grew  
 bold,  
 And poesied with hers in dewy rhyme :  
 Great bliss was with them, and great  
 happiness  
 Grew, like a lusty flower in June's caress.

Parting they seem'd to tread upon the air,  
 Twin roses by the zephyr blown apart  
 Only to meet again more close, and share  
 The inward fragrance of each other's  
 heart.

She, to her chamber gone, a ditty fair  
 Sang, of delicious love and honey'd dart ;  
 He with light steps went up a western  
 hill,  
 And bade the sun farewell, and joy'd his  
 fill.

All close they met again, before the dusk  
 Had taken from the stars its pleasant  
 veil,  
 All close they met, all eves, before the  
 dusk

Had taken from the stars its pleasant  
 veil,  
 Close in a bower of hyacinth and musk,  
 Unknown of any, free from whispering  
 tale.

Ah ! better had it been for ever so,  
 Than idle ears should pleasure in their  
 woe.

Were they unhappy then ? — It cannot  
 be —

Too many tears for lovers have been  
 shed,  
 Too many sighs give we to them in fee,  
 Too much of pity after they are dead,  
 Too many doleful stories do we see,  
 Whose matter in bright gold were best  
 be read ;  
 Except in such a page where Theseus'  
 spouse  
 Over the pathless waves towards him  
 bows.

But, for the general award of love,  
 The little sweet doth kill much bitter-  
 ness ;

Though Dido silent is in under-grove,  
 And Isabella's was a great distress,  
 Though young Lorenzo in warm Indian  
 clove

Was not embalm'd, this truth is not  
 the less —

Even bees, the little almsmen of spring-  
bowers,  
Know there is richest juice in poison-  
flowers.

With her two brothers this fair lady dwelt,  
Enriched from ancestral merchandise,  
And for them many a weary hand did  
swelt

In torched mines and noisy factories,  
And many once proud-quiver'd loins did  
melt

In blood from stinging whip; — with  
hollow eyes

Many all day in dazzling river stood,  
To take the rich-ored driftings of the  
flood.

For them the Ceylon diver held his  
breath,

And went all naked to the hungry  
shark;

For them his ears gush'd blood; for  
them in death

The seal on the cold ice with piteous  
bark

Lay full of darts; for them alone did  
seethe

A thousand men in troubles wide and  
dark:

Half-ignorant, they turn'd an easy wheel,  
That set sharp racks at work, to pinch  
and peel.

Why were they proud? Because their  
marble founts

Gush'd with more pride than do a  
wretch's tears? —

Why were they proud? Because fair  
orange-mounts

Were of more soft ascent than lazar  
stairs? —

Why were they proud? Because red-lin'd  
accounts

Were richer than the songs of Grecian  
years? —

Why were they proud? again we ask  
aloud,

Why in the name of Glory were they  
proud?

Yet were these Florentines as self-re-  
tired

In hungry pride and gainful cowardice,  
As two close Hebrews in that land in-  
spired,

Paled in and vineyarded from beggar-  
spies;

The hawks of ship-mast forests — the  
untired

And pannier'd mules for ducats and  
old lies —

Quick cat's-paws on the generous stray-  
away, —

Great wits in Spanish, Tuscan, and  
Malay.

How was it these same ledger-men could  
spy

Fair Isabella in her downy nest?

How could they find out in Lorenzo's  
eye

A straying from his toil? Hot Egypt's  
pest

Into their vision covetous and sly!

How could these money-bags see east  
and west? —

Yet so they did — and every dealer fair  
Must see behind, as doth the hunted  
hare.

O eloquent and famed Boccaccio!

Of thee we now should ask forgiving  
boon,

And of thy spicy myrtles as they blow,  
And of thy roses amorous of the moon,  
And of thy lilies, that do paler grow

Now they can no more hear thy ghit-  
tern's tune,

For venturing syllables that ill beseem  
The quiet glooms of such a piteous theme.

Grant thou a pardon here, and then the  
tale

Shall move on soberly, as it is meet;

There is no other crime, no mad assail  
To make old prose in modern rhyme

more sweet:

But it is done — succeed the verse or  
faint —

To honor thee, and thy gone spirit  
greet;

To stead thee as a verse in English tongue,  
An echo of thee in the north-wind sung.

These brethren having found by many  
signs

What love Lorenzo for their sister had,  
And how she lov'd him too, each uncon-  
fines

His bitter thoughts to other, well-nigh  
mad



That he, the servant of their trade de-  
signs,  
Should in their sister's love be blithe  
and glad  
When 'twas their plan to coax her by  
degrees  
To some high noble and his olive-trees.

And many a jealous conference had they,  
And many times they bit their lips  
alone,  
Before they fix'd upon a surest way  
To make the youngster for his crime  
atone;  
And at the last, these men of cruel clay  
Cut Mercy with a sharp knife to the  
bone;  
For they resolved in some forest dim  
To kill Lorenzo, and there bury him.

So on a pleasant morning, as he leant  
Into the sun-rise, o'er the balustrade  
Of the garden-terrace, towards him they  
bent  
Their footing through the dews; and  
to him said,  
"You seem there in the quiet of content,  
Lorenzo, and we are most loth to  
invade  
Calm speculation; but if you are wise,  
Bestride your steed while cold is in the  
skies.

"To-day we purpose, ay, this hour we  
mount  
To spur three leagues towards the  
Apennine;  
Come down, we pray thee, ere the hot  
sun count  
His dewy rosary on the eglantine."  
Lorenzo, courteously as he was wont,  
Bow'd a fair greeting to these serpents'  
whine;  
And went in haste, to get in readiness,  
With belt, and spur, and bracing hunts-  
man's dress.

And as he to the court-yard pass'd along,  
Each third step did he pause, and  
listen'd oft  
If he could hear his lady's matin-song,  
Or the light whisper of her footstep  
soft;  
And as he thus over his passion hung,  
He heard a laugh full musical aloft;

When, looking up, he saw her features  
bright  
Smile through an in-door lattice, all  
delight.

"Love, Isabel!" said he, "I was in pain  
Lest I should miss to bid thee a good  
morrow:

Ah! what if I should lose thee, when so  
fain

I am to stifle all the heavy sorrow  
Of a poor three hours' absence? but  
we'll gain

Out of the amorous dark what day  
doth borrow.

Good bye! I'll soon be back." — "Good  
bye!" said she: —

And as he went she chanted merrily.

So the two brothers and their murder'd  
man

Rode past fair Florence, to where  
Arno's stream

Gurges through straiten'd banks, and  
still doth fan

Itself with dancing bulrush, and the  
bream

Keeps head against the freshets. Sick  
and wan

The brothers' faces in the ford did  
seem,

Lorenzo's flush with love. — They pass'd  
the water

Into a forest quiet for the slaughter.

There was Lorenzo slain and buried in,  
There in that forest did his great love  
cease;

Ah! when a soul doth thus its freedom  
win,

It aches in loneliness — is ill at peace  
As the break-covert blood-hounds of  
such sin:

They dipp'd their swords in the water,  
and did tease

Their horses homeward, with convulsed  
spur,

Each richer by his being a murderer.

They told their sister how, with sudden  
speed,

Lorenzo had ta'en ship for foreign  
lands,

Because of some great urgency and need  
In their affairs, requiring trusty hands.

Poor Girl! put on thy stifling widow's  
weed,  
And 'scape at once from Hope's accursed  
bands;  
To-day thou wilt not see him, nor to-morrow,  
And the next day will be a day of sorrow.

She weeps alone for pleasures not to be;  
Sorely she wept until the night came  
on,

And then, instead of love, O misery!  
She brooded o'er the luxury alone:  
His image in the dusk she seem'd to see,  
And to the silence made a gentle moan,  
Spreading her perfect arms upon the air,  
And on her couch low murmuring,  
"Where? O where?"

But Selfishness, Love's cousin, held not  
long

Its fiery vigil in her single breast;  
She fretted for the golden hour, and hung  
Upon the time with feverish unrest —  
Not long — for soon into her heart a  
throng

Of higher occupants, a richer zest,  
Came tragic; passion not to be subdued,  
And sorrow for her love in travels rude.

In the mid days of autumn, on their eyes  
The breath of Winter comes from far  
away,

And the sick west continually bereaves  
Of some gold tinge, and plays a round-  
delay

Of death among the bushes and the  
leaves

To make all bare before he cares to  
stray

From his north cavern. So sweet Isabel  
By gradual decay from beauty fell,

Because Lorenzo came not. Oftentimes  
She ask'd her brothers, with an eye all  
pale,

Striving to be itself, what dungeon climes  
Could keep him off so long? They  
spake a tale,

Time after time, to quiet her. Their  
crimes

Came on them, like a smoke from Hin-  
nom's vale;

And every night in dreams they groan'd  
aloud,

To see their sister in her snowy shroud.

And she had died in drowsy ignorance,  
But for a thing more deadly dark than  
all;

It came like a fierce potion, drunk by  
chance,

Which saves a sick man from the  
feather'd pall

For some few gasping moments; like a  
lance,

Waking an Indian from his cloudy hall  
With cruel pierce, and bringing him again  
Sense of the gnawing fire at heart and  
brain.

It was a vision. — In the drowsy gloom,  
The dull of midnight, at her couch's  
foot

Lorenzo stood, and wept; the forest tomb  
Had marr'd his glossy hair which once  
could shoot

Lustre into the sun, and put cold doom  
Upon his lips, and taken the soft lute  
From his lorn voice, and past his loamed  
ears

Had made a miry channel for his tears.

Strange sound it was, when the pale  
shadow spake;

For there was striving, in its piteous  
tongue,

To speak as when on earth it was awake,  
And Isabella on its music hung:

Languor there was in it, and tremulous  
shake,

As in a palsied Druid's harp unstrung;  
And through it moan'd a ghostly under-  
song,

Like hoarse night-gusts sepulchral briars  
among.

Its eyes, though wild, were still all dewy  
bright

With love, and kept all phantom fear  
aloof

From the poor girl by magic of their  
light,

The while it did unthread the horrid  
woof

Of the late darken'd time, — the murder-  
ous spite

Of pride and avarice, the dark pine  
roof

In the forest, — and the sodden turfed  
dell,

Where, without any word, from stabs  
he fell.

Saying moreover, "Isabel, my sweet!  
 Red whortle-berries droop above my  
 head,  
 And a large flint-stone weighs upon my  
 feet;  
 Around me beeches and high chestnuts  
 shed  
 Their leaves and prickly nuts; a sheep-  
 fold bleat  
 Comes from beyond the river to my  
 bed:  
 Go, shed one tear upon my heatherbloom,  
 And it shall comfort me within the  
 tomb.

"I am a shadow now, alas! alas!  
 Upon the skirts of human-nature  
 dwelling  
 Alone: I chant alone the holy mass,  
 While little sounds of life are round me  
 knelling,  
 And glossy bees at noon do fieldward  
 pass,  
 And many a chapel bell the hour is  
 telling,  
 Paining me through: those sounds grow  
 strange to me,  
 And thou art distant in Humanity.

"I know what was, I feel full well what  
 is,  
 And I should rage, if spirits could go  
 mad;  
 Though I forget the taste of earthly  
 bliss,  
 That paleness warms my grave, as  
 though I had  
 A Seraph chosen from the bright abyss  
 To be my spouse: thy paleness makes  
 me glad;  
 Thy beauty grows upon me, and I feel  
 A greater love through all my essence  
 steal."

The Spirit mourn'd "Adieu!" — dis-  
 solv'd, and left  
 The atom darkness in a slow turmoil;  
 As when of healthful midnight sleep  
 bereft,  
 Thinking on rugged hours and fruitless  
 toil,  
 We put our eyes into a pillowy cleft,  
 And see the spangly gloom froth up  
 and boil:  
 It made sad Isabella's eyelids ache,  
 And in the dawn she started up awake;

"Ha! ha!" said she, "I knew not this  
 hard life,  
 I thought the worst was simple misery;  
 I thought some Fate with pleasure or  
 with strife  
 Portion'd us — happy days, or else to  
 die;  
 But there is crime — a brother's bloody  
 knife!  
 Sweet Spirit, thou hast school'd my  
 infancy:  
 I'll visit thee for this, and kiss thine eyes,  
 And greet thee morn and even in the  
 skies."

When the full morning came, she had  
 devised  
 How she might secret to the forest hie;  
 How she might find the clay, so dearly  
 prized,  
 And sing to it one latest lullaby;  
 How her short absence might be unsur-  
 mised,  
 While she the inmost of the dream  
 would try.  
 Resolv'd, she took with her an aged nurse,  
 And went into that dismal forest-hearse.

See, as they creep along the river side,  
 How she doth whisper to that aged  
 Dame,  
 And, after looking round the champaign  
 wide,  
 Shows her a knife. — "What feverous  
 hectic flame  
 Burns in thee, child? — What good can  
 thee betide,  
 That thou should'st smile again?" —  
 The evening came,  
 And they had found Lorenzo's earthy bed;  
 The flint was there, the berries at his  
 head.

Who hath not loiter'd in a green church-  
 yard,  
 And let his spirit, like a demon-mole,  
 Work through the clayey soil and gravel  
 hard,  
 To see skull, coffin'd bones, and funeral  
 stole;  
 Pitying each form that hungry Death  
 hath marr'd,  
 And filling it once more with human  
 soul?  
 Ah! this is holiday to what was felt  
 When Isabella by Lorenzo knelt,

She gaz'd into the fresh-thrown mould, as  
though

One glance did fully all its secrets tell;  
Clearly she saw, as other eyes would know  
Pale limbs at bottom of a crystal well;  
Upon the murderous spot she seem'd to  
grow,

Like to a native lily of the dell:  
Then with her knife, all sudden, she began  
To dig more fervently than misers can.

Soon she turn'd up a soiled glove, whereon  
Her silk had play'd in purple phan-  
tasies,  
She kiss'd it with a lip more chill than  
stone,

And put it in her bosom, where it dries  
And freezes utterly unto the bone

Those dainties made to still an infant's  
cries:

Then 'gan she work again; nor stay'd  
her care,  
But to throw back at times her veiling  
hair.

That old nurse stood beside her wondering  
Until her heart felt pity to the core

At sight of such a dismal laboring,  
And so she kneeled, with her locks all  
hoar,

And put her lean hands to the horrid  
thing:

Three hours they labor'd at this travail  
sore;

At last they felt the kernel of the grave,  
And Isabella did not stamp and rave.

Ah! wherefore all this wormy circum-  
stance?

Why linger at the yawning tomb so  
long?

O for the gentleness of old Romance,  
The simple plaining of a minstrel's  
song!

Fair reader, at the old tale take a glance,  
For here, in truth, it doth not well  
belong

To speak: — O turn thee to the very tale,  
And taste the music of that vision pale.

With duller steel than the Perséan sword  
They cut away no formless monster's  
head,

But one, whose gentleness did well accord  
With death, as life. The ancient harps  
have said,

Love never dies, but lives, immortal  
Lord:

If Love impersonate was ever dead,  
Pale Isabella kiss'd it, and low moan'd  
'Twas love; cold, — dead indeed, but not  
dethroned.

In anxious secrecy they took it home,  
And then the prize was all for Isabel:  
She calmd its wild hair with a golden  
comb,

And all around each eye's sepulchral  
cell

Pointed each fringed lash; the smeared  
loam

With tears, as chilly as a dripping well,  
She drench'd away: — and still she  
comb'd, and kept

Sighing all day — and still she kiss'd, and  
wept.

Then in a silken scarf, sweet with the  
dews

Of precious flowers pluck'd in Araby,  
And divine liquids come with odorous  
ooze

Through the cold serpent pipe refresh-  
fully, —

She wrapp'd it up; and for its tomb did  
choose

A garden-pot, wherein she laid it by  
And cover'd it with mould and, o'er it set  
Sweet Basil, which her tears kept ever  
wet.

And she forgot the stars, the moon, and  
sun,

And she forgot the blue above the trees,  
And she forgot the dells where waters  
run,

And she forgot the chilly autumn  
breeze;

She had no knowledge when the day was  
done,

And the new morn she saw not: but  
in peace

Hung over her sweet Basil evermore,  
And moisten'd it with tears unto the  
core.

And so she ever fed it with thin tears,  
Whence thick, and green, and beautiful  
it grew,

So that it smelt more balmy than its  
peers

Of Basil-tufts in Florence; for it drew

Nurture besides, and life, from human  
fears,  
From the fast mouldering head there  
shut from view :  
So that the jewel, safely casketed,  
Came forth, and in perfumed leafits  
spread.

O Melancholy, linger here awhile !  
O Music, Music, breathe despondingly !  
O Echo, Echo, from some sombre isle,  
Unknown, Lethean, sigh to us — O  
sigh !  
Spirits in grief, lift up your heads, and  
smile ;  
Lift up your heads, sweet Spirits,  
heavily,  
And make a pale light in your cypress  
glooms,  
Tinting with silver wan your marble  
tombs.

Moan hither, all ye syllables of woe,  
From the deep throat of sad Mel-  
pomene !  
Through bronzed lyre in tragic order go,  
And touch the strings into a mystery ;  
Sound mournfully upon the winds and  
low ;  
For simple Isabel is soon to be  
Among the dead : She withers, like a palm  
Cut by an Indian for its juicy balm.

O leave the palm to wither by itself ;  
Let not quick Winter chill its dying  
hour ! —  
It may not be — those Baälites of pelf,  
Her brethren, noted the continual  
shower  
From her dead eyes ; and many a curious  
elf,  
Among her kindred, wonder'd that  
such dower  
Of youth and beauty should be thrown  
aside  
By one mark'd out to be a Noble's bride.

And, furthermore, her brethren wonder'd  
much  
Why she sat drooping by the Basil  
green,  
And why it flourish'd, as by magic touch ;  
Greatly they wonder'd what the thing  
might mean  
They could not surely give belief, that  
such

A very nothing would have power to  
wean  
Her from her own fair youth, and  
pleasures gay,  
And even remembrance of her love's de-  
lay.

Therefore they watch'd a time when they  
might sift  
This hidden whim ; and long they  
watch'd in vain ;  
For seldom did she go to chapel-shrift,  
And seldom felt she any hunger-pain ;  
And when she left, she hurried back, as  
swift  
As bird on wing to breast its eggs again ;  
And, patient as a hen-bird, sat her there  
Beside her Basil, weeping through her  
hair.

Yet they contriv'd to steal the Basil-pot  
And to examine it in secret place :  
The thing was vile with green and livid  
spot,  
And yet they knew it was Lorenzo's  
face ;  
The guerdon of their murder they had got,  
And so left Florence in a moment's  
space,  
Never to turn again. — Away they went,  
With blood upon their heads, to banish-  
ment.

O Melancholy, turn thine eyes away !  
O Music, Music, breathe despondingly !  
O Echo, Echo, on some other day,  
From isles Lethean, sigh to us — O sigh !  
Spirits of grief, sing not your "Well-a-  
way !"  
For Isabel, sweet Isabel, will die :  
Will die a death too lone and incomplete.  
Now they have ta'en away her Basil  
sweet.

Piteous she look'd on dead and senseless  
things,  
Asking for her lost Basil amorously :  
And with melodious chuckle in the strings  
Of her lorn voice, she oftentimes would  
cry  
After the Pilgrim in his wanderings,  
To ask him where her Basil was ; and  
why  
'Twas hid from her : "For cruel 'tis,"  
said she,  
"To steal my Basil-pot away from me."



And so she pined, and so she died forlorn,  
 Implored for her Basil to the last.  
 No heart was there in Florence but did  
 mourn

In pity of her love, so overcast.  
 And a sad ditty of this story borne  
 From mouth to mouth through all the  
 country pass'd:

Still is the burthen sung — "O cruelty,  
 To steal my Basil-pot away from me!"  
 1818. 1820.

### THE EVE OF ST. AGNES

ST. AGNES' EVE — Ah, bitter chill it was!  
 The owl, for all his feathers, was a-cold;  
 The hare limp'd trembling through the  
 frozen grass,

And silent was the flock in woolly fold:  
 Numb were the Beadsman's fingers, while  
 he told

His rosary, and while his frosted breath,  
 Like pious incense from a censer old,  
 Seem'd taking flight for heaven, without  
 a death,

Past the sweet Virgin's picture, while his  
 prayer he saith.

His prayer he saith, this patient, holy man  
 Then takes his lamp, and riseth from his  
 knees,

And back returneth, meagre, barefoot,  
 wan,

Along the chapel aisle by slow degrees:  
 The sculptur'd dead, on each side, seem  
 to freeze,

Emprison'd in black, purgatorial rails:  
 Knights, ladies, praying in dumb ora-  
 t'ries,

He passeth by; and his weak spirit fails  
 To think how they may ache in icy hoods  
 and mails.

Northward he turneth through a little  
 door,

And scarce three steps, ere Music's  
 golden tongue

Flatter'd to tears this aged man and poor;  
 But no — already had his deathbell rung:  
 The joys of all his life were said and sung:  
 His was harsh penance on St. Agnes' Eve:  
 Another way he went, and soon among  
 Rough ashes sat he for his soul's reprieve,  
 And all night kept awake, for sinners'  
 sake to grieve,

That ancient Beadsman heard the pre-  
 lude soft;

And so it chanc'd, for many a door was  
 wide,

From hurry to and fro. Soon, up aloft,  
 The silver, snarling trumpets 'gan to  
 chide:

The level chambers, ready with their  
 pride,

Were glowing to receive a thousand  
 guests:

The carved angels, ever eager-eyed,  
 Star'd where upon their heads the cornice  
 rests,

With hair blown back, and wings put  
 cross-wise on their breasts.

At length burst in the argent revelry,  
 With plume, tiara, and all rich array,  
 Numerous and shadows haunting fairly  
 The brain, new stuff'd, in youth, with  
 triumphs gay

Of old romance. These let us wish away,  
 And turn, sole-thoughted, to one Lady  
 there,

Whose heart had brooded, all that wintry  
 day,

On love, and wing'd St. Agnes' saintly care,  
 As she had heard old dames full many  
 times declare.

They told her how, upon St. Agnes' Eve,  
 Young virgins might have visions of  
 delight,

And soft adorings from their loves receive  
 Upon the honey'd middle of the night

If ceremonies due they did aright;  
 As, supperless to bed they must retire,  
 And couch supine their beauties, lily  
 white;

Nor look behind, nor sideways, but re-  
 quire

Of Heaven with upward eyes for all that  
 they desire.

Full of this whim was thoughtful Made-  
 line;

The music, yearning like a God in pain,  
 She scarcely heard: her maiden eyes  
 divine,

Fix'd on the floor, saw many a sweeping  
 train

Pass by — she heeded not at all: in vain  
 Came many a tiptoe, amorous cavalier,  
 And back retir'd; not cool'd by high  
 disdain.

But she saw not: her heart was other-  
where:  
She sigh'd for Agnes' dreams, the sweetest  
of the year.

She danc'd along with vague, regardless  
eyes,  
Anxious her lips, her breathing quick  
and short:

The hallow'd hour was near at hand: she  
sighs

Amid the timbrels, and the throng'd  
resort

Of whisperers in anger, or in sport;  
'Mid looks of love, defiance, hate, and  
scorn,

Hoodwink'd with faery fancy; all amorn,  
Save to St. Agnes and her lambs unshorn,  
And all the bliss to be before to-morrow  
morn.

So, purposing each moment to retire,  
She linger'd still. Meantime, across the  
moors,

Had come young Porphyro, with heart  
on fire

For Madeline. Beside the portal doors,  
Buttress'd from moonlight, stands he, and  
implores

All saints to give him sight of Madeline,  
But for one moment in the tedious hours,  
That he might gaze and worship all  
unseen;

Perchance speak, kneel, touch, kiss — in  
sooth such things have been.

He ventures in: let no buzz'd whisper  
tell:

All eyes be muffled, or a hundred swords  
Will storm his heart, Love's fev'rous  
citadel:

For him, those chambers held barbarian  
hordes,

Hyena foemen, and hot-blooded lords,  
Whose very dogs would execrations howl  
Against his lineage: not one breast  
affords

Him any mercy, in that mansion foul,  
Save one old beldame, weak in body and  
in soul.

Ah, happy chance! the aged creature  
came,

Shuffling along with ivory-headed wand,  
To where he stood, hid from the torch's  
flame,

Behind a broad hall-pillar, far beyond  
The sound of merriment and chorus  
bland:

He startled her; but soon she knew his  
face,

And grasp'd his fingers in her palsied  
hand,

Saying, "Mercy, Porphyro! hie thee  
from this place;

They are all here to-night, the whole  
blood-thirsty race!

Get hence! get hence! there's dwarfish  
Hildebrand;

He had a fever late, and in the fit  
He cursed thee and thine, both house and  
land:

Then there's that old Lord Maurice, not  
a whit

More tame for his gray hairs — Alas me!  
flit!

Flit like a ghost away." — "Ah, Gossip  
dear,

We're safe enough; here in this arm-chair  
sit,

And tell me how" — "Good Saints! not  
here, not here;

Follow me, child, or else these stones  
will be thy bier."

He follow'd through a lowly arched way,  
Brushing the cobwebs with his lofty  
plume;

And as she mutter'd "Well-a — well-a-  
day!"

He found him in a little moonlight room,  
Pale, lattic'd, chill, and silent as a tomb.

"Now tell me where is Madeline," said he,  
"O tell me, Angela, by the holy loom

Which none but secret sisterhood may  
see,

When they St. Agnes' wool are weaving  
piously."

"St. Agnes! Ah! it is St. Agnes' Eve —  
Yet men will murder upon holy days:

Thou must hold water in a witch's sieve,  
And be liege-lord of all the Elves and  
Fays,

To venture so: it fills me with amaze  
To see thee, Porphyro! — St. Agnes' Eve!

God's help! my lady fair the conjurer  
plays

This very night; good angels her deceive!  
But let me laugh awhile, I've mickle  
time to grieve."

Feebly she laugheth in the languid moon,  
While Porphyro upon her face doth look,  
Like puzzled urchin on an aged crone  
Who keepeth clos'd a wond'rous riddle-  
book,

As spectacled she sits in chimney nook.  
But soon his eyes grew brilliant, when she  
told

His lady's purpose; and he scarce could  
brook

Tears, at the thought of those enchant-  
ments cold,

And Madeline asleep in lap of legends old.

Sudden a thought came like a full-blown  
rose,

Flushing his brow, and in his pained  
heart

Made purple riot: then doth he propose  
A stratagem, that makes the beldame  
start:

"A cruel man and impious thou art:  
Sweet lady, let her pray, and sleep, and  
dream

Alone with her good angels, far apart  
From wicked men like thee. Go, go!—  
I deem

Thou canst not surely be the same that  
thou didst seem."

"I will not harm her, by all saints I  
swear."

Quoth Porphyro: "O may I ne'er find  
grace

When my weak voice shall whisper its  
last prayer,

If one of her soft ringlets I displace,  
Or look with ruffian passion in her face:

Good Angela, believe me by these tears;  
Or I will, even in a moment's space,

Awake, with horrid shout, my foemen's  
ears,

And beard them, though they be more  
fang'd than wolves and bears."

"Ah! why wilt thou affright a feeble  
soul?

A poor, weak, palsy-stricken churchyard  
thing,

Whose passing-bell may ere the midnight  
toll;

Whose prayers for thee, each morn and  
evening,

Were never miss'd." Thus plaining,  
doth she bring

A gentler speech from burning Porphyro;

So woful, and of such deep sorrowing,  
That Angela gives promise she will do  
Whatever he shall wish, betide her weal  
or woe.

Which was, to lead him, in close secrecy,  
Even to Madeline's chamber, and there  
hide

Him in a closet, of such privacy  
That he might see her beauty unespied,  
And win perhaps that night a peerless  
bride,

While legion'd fairies pac'd the coverlet,  
And pale enchantment held her sleepy-  
eyed.

Never on such a night have lovers met,  
Since Merlin paid his Demon all the  
monstrous debt.

"It shall be as thou wishest," said the  
Dame:

"All cates and dainties shall be stored  
there

Quickly on this feast-night: by the  
tambour frame

Her own lute thou wilt see: no time to  
spare,

For I am slow and feeble, and scarce  
dare

On such a catering trust my dizzy head.  
Wait here, my child, with patience; kneel  
in prayer

The while: Ah! thou must needs the  
lady wed,

Or may I never leave my grave among the  
dead."

So saying, she hobbled off with busy fear.  
The lover's endless minutes slowly pass'd;  
The dame return'd, and whisper'd in his  
ear

To follow her; with aged eyes aghast  
From fright of dim espial. Safe at last,  
Through many a dusky gallery, they  
gain

The maiden's chamber, silken, hush'd,  
and chaste;

Where Porphyro took covert, pleas'd  
amain.

His poor guide hurried back with agues  
in her brain.

Her falt'ring hand upon the balustrade  
Old Angela was feeling for the stair,  
When Madeline, St. Agnes' charmed maid,  
Rose, like a mission'd spirit, unaware:

With silver taper's light, and pious care,  
 She turn'd, and down the aged gossip led  
 To a safe level matting. Now prepare,  
 Young Porphyro, for gazing on that bed;  
 She comes, she comes again, like ring-  
 dove pray'd and fled.

Out went the taper as she hurried in;  
 Its little smoke, in pallid moonshine, died:  
 She clos'd the door, she panted, all akin  
 To spirits of the air, and visions wide:  
 No uttered syllable, or, woe betide!  
 But to her heart, her heart was voluble,  
 Paining with eloquence her balmy side;  
 As though a tongueless nightingale should  
 swell  
 Her throat in vain, and die, heart-stifled,  
 in her dell.

A casement high and triple arch'd there  
 was,  
 All garlanded with carven imag'ries  
 Of fruits, and flowers, and bunches of  
 knot-grass.  
 And diamonded with panes of quaint  
 device,  
 Innumerable of stains and splendid dyes,  
 As are the tiger-moth's deep-damask'd  
 wings;  
 And in the midst, 'mong thousand  
 heraldries,  
 And twilight saints, and dim emblazon-  
 ings,  
 A shielded scutcheon blush'd with blood  
 of queens and kings.

Full on this casement shone the wintry  
 moon,  
 And threw warm gules on Madeline's fair  
 breast,  
 As down she knelt for heaven's grace and  
 boon;  
 Rose-bloom fell on her hands, together  
 prest,  
 And on her silver cross soft amethyst,  
 And on her hair a glory, like a saint:  
 She seem'd a splendid angel, newly drest,  
 Save wings, for heaven: Porphyro grew  
 faint:  
 She knelt, so pure a thing, so free from  
 mortal taint.

Anon his heart revives: her vespers done,  
 Of all its weathered pearls her hair she  
 frees;  
 Unclasps her warmed jewels one by one;

Loosens her fragrant boddice; by degrees  
 Her rich attire creeps rustling to her knees;  
 Half-hidden, like a mermaid in seaweed,  
 Pensive awhile she dreams awake, and  
 sees,

In fancy, fair St. Agnes in her bed,  
 But dares not look behind, or all the  
 charm is fled.

Soon, trembling in her soft and chilly  
 nest,  
 In sort of wakeful swoon, perplex'd she  
 lay.  
 Until the poppi'd warmth of sleep op-  
 press'd  
 Her soothed limbs, and soul fatigued  
 away;  
 Flown, like a thought, until the morn-  
 day;  
 Blissfully haven'd both from joy and  
 pain;  
 Clasp'd like a missal where swart Pay-  
 nims pray;  
 Blinded alike from sunshine and from  
 rain,  
 As though a rose should shut, and be a  
 bud again.

Stol'n to this paradise, and so entranced,  
 Porphyro gazed upon her empty dress,  
 And listen'd to her breathing, if it chanced  
 To wake into a slumberous tenderness;  
 Which when he heard, that minute did he  
 bless,  
 And breath'd himself: then from the  
 closet crept,  
 Noiseless as fear in a wide wilderness,  
 And over the hush'd carpet, silent,  
 stepped,  
 And 'tween the curtains peep'd, where,  
 lo! — how fast she slept.

Then by the bed-side, where the faded  
 moon  
 Made a dim, silver twilight, soft he set  
 A table, and, half-anguish'd, threw  
 thereon  
 A cloth of woven crimson, gold, and  
 jet: —  
 O for some drowsy Morphean amulet!  
 The boisterous, midnight, festive clarion,  
 The kettle-drum, and far-heard clarionet,  
 Affray his ears, though but in dying  
 tone: —  
 The hall door shuts again, and all the  
 noise is gone.

And still she slept an azure-lidded sleep,  
 In blanch'd linen, smooth, and laven-  
 der'd,  
 While he from forth the closet brought  
 a heap  
 Of candied apple, quince, and plum, and  
 gourd;  
 With jellies soother than the creamy  
 curd,  
 And lucent syrups, tinct with cinna-  
 mon;  
 Manna and dates, in argosy transferr'd  
 From Fez; and spiced dainties, every  
 one,  
 From silken Samarcand to cedar'd Le-  
 banon.

These delicacies he heap'd with glowing  
 hand  
 On golden dishes and in baskets bright  
 Of wreathed silver: sumptuous they  
 stand  
 In the retired quiet of the night,  
 Filling the chilly room with perfume  
 light. —  
 "And now, my love, my seraph fair,  
 awake!  
 Thou art my heaven, and I thine hermit;  
 Open thine eyes, for meek St. Agnes'  
 sake,  
 Or I shall drowse beside thee, so my soul  
 doth ache."

Thus whispering, his warm, unnerved  
 arm  
 Sank in her pillow. Shaded was her  
 dream  
 By the dusk curtains: — 'twas a mid-  
 night charm  
 Impossible to melt as iced stream:  
 The lustrous salvers in the moonlight  
 gleam:  
 Broad golden fringe upon the carpet lies:  
 It seem'd he never, never could redeem  
 From such a stedfast spell his lady's eyes;  
 So mus'd awhile, entail'd in woofed  
 phantasies.

Awakening up, he took her hollow lute, —  
 Tumultuous, — and, in chords that ten-  
 derest be,  
 He play'd an ancient ditty, long since  
 mute,  
 In Provence call'd, "La belle dame sans  
 mercy:"  
 Close to her ear touching the melody; —

Wherewith disturb'd, she utter'd a soft  
 moan:  
 He ceased — she panted quick — and  
 suddenly  
 Her blue affrayed eyes wide open shone:  
 Upon his knees he sank, pale as smooth-  
 sculptured stone.

Her eyes were open, but she still beheld,  
 Now wide awake, the vision of her sleep:  
 There was a painful change, that nigh  
 expell'd  
 The blisses of her dream so pure and deep  
 At which fair Madeline began to weep,  
 And moan forth witless words with many  
 a sigh;  
 While still her gaze on Porphyro would  
 keep;  
 Who knelt, with joined hands and piteous  
 eye.  
 Fearing to move or speak, she look'd so  
 dreamingly.

"Ah, Porphyro!" said she, "but even  
 now  
 Thy voice was at sweet tremble in mine  
 ear,  
 Made tuneable with every sweetest vow;  
 And those sad eyes were spiritual and  
 clear:  
 How chang'd thou art! how pallid, chill,  
 and drear!  
 Give me that voice again, my Porphyro,  
 Those looks immortal, those complain-  
 ings dear!  
 Oh leave me not in this eternal woe,  
 For if thou diest, my Love, I know not  
 where to go."

Beyond a mortal man impassion'd far  
 At these voluptuous accents, he arose,  
 Ethereal, flush'd, and like a throbbing  
 star  
 Seen mid the sapphire heaven's deep  
 repose;  
 Into her dream he melted, as the rose  
 Blendeth its odor with the violet, —  
 Solution sweet: meantime the frost wind  
 blows  
 Like Love's alarum pattering the sharp  
 sleet  
 Against the window-panes; St. Agnes'  
 moon hath set.

'Tis dark: quick pattereth the flaw-  
 blown sleet:



"This is no dream, my bride, my Madeline!"

'Tis dark: the iced gusts still rave and beat:

"No dream, alas! alas! and woe is mine!  
Porphyro will leave me here to fade and pine.—

Cruel! what traitor could thee hither bring?

I curse not, for my heart is lost in thine.  
Though thou forsakest a deceived thing;—

A dove forlorn and lost with sick unpruned wing."

"My Madeline! sweet dreamer! lovely bride!

Say, may I be for aye thy vassal blest?  
The beauty's shield, heart-shap'd and vermeil dyed?

Ah, silver shrine, here will I take my rest  
After so many hours of toil and quest,  
A famish'd pilgrim,— saved by miracle.  
Though I have found, I will not rob thy nest

Saving of thy sweet self; if thou think'st well

To trust, fair Madeline, to no rude infidel.

"Hark! 'tis an elfin-storm from faery land,

Of haggard seeming, but a boon indeed:  
Arise—arise! the morning is at hand;—  
The bloated wassaillers will never heed:—

Let us away, my love, with happy speed:  
There are no ears to hear, or eyes to see,—

Drown'd all in Rhenish and the sleepy mead:

Awake! arise! my love, and fearless be,  
For o'er the southern moors I have a home for thee."

She hurried at his words, beset with fears,  
For there were sleeping dragons all around,

At glaring watch, perhaps, with ready spears—

Down the wide stairs a darkling way they found.—

In all the house was heard no human sound.

A chain-droop'd lamp was flickering by each door;

The arras, rich with horseman, hawk, and hound,

Flutter'd in the besieging wind's uproar;  
And the long carpets rose along the gusty floor.

They glide, like phantoms, into the wide hall;

Like phantoms, to the iron porch, they glide;

Where lay the Porter, in uneasy sprawl,  
With a huge empty flagon by his side:  
The wakeful bloodhound rose, and shook his hide,

But his sagacious eye an inmate owns:  
By one, and one, the bolts full easy slide:—

The chains lie silent on the footworn stones;—

The key turns, and the door upon its hinges groans.

And they are gone: ay, ages long ago  
These lovers fled away into the storm.

That night the Baron dreamt of many a woe,

And all his warrior-guests, with shade and form

Of witch, and demon, and large coffin-worm,

Were long be-nightmar'd. Angela the old

Died palsy-twitch'd, with meagre face deform;

The Beadsman, after thousand aves told,  
For aye unsought for slept among his ashes cold.

*January, 1819. 1820.*

## THE EVE OF SAINT MARK

### A FRAGMENT

UPON a Sabbath-day it fell;  
Twice holy was the Sabbath-bell,  
That call'd the folks to evening prayer;  
The city streets were clean and fair  
From wholesome drench of April rains;  
And, on the western window panes,  
The chilly sunset faintly told  
Of unmatu'r'd green valleys cold,  
Of the green thorny bloomless hedge,  
Of rivers new with spring-tide sedge,  
Of primroses by shelter'd rills,  
And daisies on the aguish hills.

Twice holy was the Sabbath-bell :  
 The silent streets were crowded well  
 With staid and pious companies,  
 Warm from their fire-side oratories ;  
 And moving, with demurest air,  
 To even-song, and vesper prayer.  
 Each arched porch, and entry low,  
 Was fill'd with patient folk and slow,  
 With whispers hush, and shuffling feet,  
 While play'd the organ loud and sweet.

The bells had ceas'd, the prayers begun,  
 And Bertha had not yet half done  
 A curious volume, patch'd and torn,  
 That all day long, from earliest morn,  
 Had taken captive her two eyes,  
 Among its golden broideries ;  
 Perplex'd her with a thousand things, —  
 The stars of Heaven, and angels' wings,  
 Martyrs in a fiery blaze,  
 Azure saints and silver rays,  
 Moses' breastplate, and the seven  
 Candlesticks John saw in Heaven,  
 The winged Lion of St. Mark,  
 And the Covenantal Ark,  
 With its many mysteries,  
 Cherubim and golden mice.

Bertha was a maiden fair,  
 Dwelling in th' old Minster-square ;  
 From her fire-side she could see,  
 Sidelong, its rich antiquity.  
 Far as the Bishop's garden-wall ;  
 Where sycamores and elm-trees tall,  
 Full-leav'd, the forest had outstript,  
 By no sharp north-wind ever nipt,  
 So shelter'd by the mighty pile.  
 Bertha arose, and read awhile,  
 With forehead 'gainst the window-pane  
 Again she try'd, and then again,  
 Until the dusk eve left her dark  
 Upon the legend of St. Mark.  
 From plated lawn-frill, fine and thin,  
 She lifted up her soft warm chin.  
 With aching neck and swimming eyes,  
 And daz'd with saintly imageries.

All was gloom, and silent all,  
 Save now and then the still foot-fall  
 Of one returning homewards late,  
 Past the echoing minster-gate.  
 The clamorous daws, that all the day  
 Above tree-tops and towers play,  
 Pair by pair had gone to rest,  
 Each in its ancient belfry nest,  
 Where asleep they fall betimes,  
 To music and the drowsy chimes.

All was silent, all was gloom,  
 Abroad and in the homely room :  
 Down she sat, poor cheated soul ;  
 And struck a lamp from the dismal coal ;  
 Lean'd forward, with bright drooping hair  
 And slant look, full against the glare.  
 Her shadow, in uneasy guise,  
 Hover'd about, a giant size,  
 On ceiling-beam and old oak chair,  
 The parrot's cage, and panel square ;  
 And the warm angled winter-screen,  
 On which were many monsters seen,  
 Call'd doves of Siam, Lima mice,  
 And legless birds of Paradise,  
 Macaw, and tender Avadavat,  
 And silken-furr'd Angora cat.  
 Untir'd she read, her shadow still  
 Glower'd about, as it would fill  
 The room with wildest forms and shades,  
 As though some ghostly queen of spades  
 Had come to mock behind her back,  
 And dance, and ruffle her garments black.  
 Untir'd she read the legend page,  
 Of holy Mark, from youth to age,  
 On land, on sea, in pagan chains,  
 Rejoicing for his many pains.  
 Sometimes the learned eremite,  
 With golden star, or dagger bright,  
 Referr'd to pious poesies  
 Written in smallest crow-quill size  
 Beneath the text : and thus the rhyme  
 Was parcel'd out from time to time :  
 — " Als writeth he of swevens,  
 Men han before they wake in bliss,  
 Whanne that hir friendes thinke him  
 bound

In crimped shroude farre under grounde :  
 And how a litling childe mote be  
 A saint er its nativite,  
 Gif that the modre (God her blesse !)  
 Kepen in solitarinesse,  
 And kissen devout the holy croce.  
 Of Goddes love, and Sathan's force, —  
 He writith ; and thinges many mo  
 Of swiche thinges I may not show.  
 Bot I must tellen verilie  
 Somdel of Saintè Cicilie,  
 And chiefly what he auctorethe  
 Of Saintè Markis life and dethe :"

At length her constant eyelids come  
 Upon the fervent martyrdom ;  
 Then lastly to his holy shrine,  
 Exalt amid the tapers' shine  
 At Venice, —

*January and September, 1819. 1848.*

## ODE ON INDOLENCE

"They toil not, neither do they spin."

ONE morn before me were three figures  
seen,  
With bowed necks, and joined hands,  
side-faced;  
And one behind the other stepp'd serene,  
In placid sandals, and in white robes  
graced;  
They pass'd, like figures on a marble urn,  
When shifted round to see the other  
side;  
They came again; as when the urn  
once more  
Is shifted round, the first seen shades  
return;  
And they were strange to me, as may  
betide  
With vases, to one deep in Phidian  
lore.

How is it, Shadows! that I knew ye not?  
How came ye muffled in so hush a  
mask?  
Was it a silent deep-disguised plot  
To steal away, and leave without a  
task  
My idle days? Ripe was the drowsy  
hour;  
The blissful cloud of summer-indolence  
Benumbed my eyes; my pulse grew  
less and less;  
Pain had no sting, and pleasure's wreath  
no flower:  
O why did ye not melt, and leave my  
sense  
Unhaunted quite of all but — nothing-  
ness?

A third time passed they by, and, passing,  
turn'd  
Each one the face a moment whiles to  
me;  
Then faded, and to follow them I burn'd  
And ach'd for wings, because I knew  
the three;  
The first was a fair Maid, and Love her  
name;  
The second was Ambition, pale of  
cheek,  
And ever watchful with fatigued  
eye;  
The last, whom I love more, the more of  
blame

Is heap'd upon her, maiden most un-  
meek, —  
I knew to be my demon Poesy.

They faded, and forsooth! I wanted  
wings:  
O folly! What is Love? and where is  
it?  
And for that poor Ambition! it springs  
From a man's little heart's short fever-  
fit;  
For Poesy! — no, — she has not a joy, —  
At least for me, — so sweet as drowsy  
noons,  
And evenings steep'd in honied in-  
dolence;  
O, for an age so sheltered from annoy,  
That I may never know how change the  
moons,  
Or hear the voice of busy common-  
sense!

And once more came they by; — alas!  
wherefore?  
My sleep had been embroider'd with  
dim dreams;  
My soul had been a lawn besprinkled  
o'er  
With flowers, and stirring shades, and  
baffled beams:  
The morn was clouded, but no shower  
fell,  
Tho' in her lids hung the sweet tears of  
May;  
The open casement press'd a new-  
leav'd vine,  
Let in the budding warmth and throstle's  
lay;  
O Shadows! 'twas a time to bid fare-  
well!  
Upon your skirts had fallen no tears  
of mine.

So, ye three Ghosts, adieu! Ye cannot  
raise  
My dead cool-bedded in the flowery  
grass;  
For I would not be dieted with praise,  
A pet-lamb in a sentimental farce!  
Fade softly from my eyes, and be once  
more  
In masque-like Figures on the dreamy  
urn;  
Farewell! I yet have visions for the  
night,

And for the day faint visions there is  
store;  
Vanish, ye Phantoms! from my idle  
spright,  
Into the clouds, and never more  
return!

*March, 1819. 1848.*

### ODE

BARDS of Passion and of Mirth,  
Ye have left your souls on earth!  
Have ye souls in heaven too,  
Double-lived in regions new?  
Yes, and those of heaven commune  
With the spheres of sun and moon;  
With the noise of fountains wond'rous,  
And the parle of voices thund'rous;  
With the whisper of heaven's trees  
And one another, in soft ease  
Seated on Elysian lawns  
Brows'd by none but Dian's fawns;  
Underneath large blue-bells tented,  
Where the daisies are rose-scented,  
And the rose herself has got  
Perfume which on earth is not;  
Where the nightingale doth sing  
Not a senseless, tranced thing,  
But divine melodious truth;  
Philosophic numbers smooth;  
Tales and golden histories  
Of heaven and its mysteries.

Thus ye live on high, and then  
On the earth ye live again;  
And the souls ye left behind you  
Teach us, here, the way to find you,  
Where your other souls are joying,  
Never slumber'd, never cloying.  
Here, your earth-born souls still speak  
To mortals, of their little week;  
Of their sorrows and delights;  
Of their passions and their spites;  
Of their glory and their shame;  
What doth strengthen and what maim.  
Thus ye teach us, every day,  
Wisdom, though fled far away.

Bards of Passion and of Mirth,  
Ye have left your souls on earth!  
Ye have souls in heaven too,  
Double-lived in regions new!

*1819. 1820,*

### ODE TO PSYCHE

O GODDESS! hear these tuneless num-  
bers, wrung  
By sweet enforcement and remem-  
brance dear,  
And pardon that thy secrets should be  
sung  
Even into thine own soft-conched ear;  
Surely I dreamt to-day, or did I see  
The winged Psyche with awaken'd  
eyes?

I wander'd in a forest thoughtlessly,  
And, on the sudden, fainting with  
surprise,

Saw two fair creatures, couched side by  
side

In deepest grass, beneath the whis-  
p'ring roof

Of leaves and trembled blossoms, where  
there ran

A brooklet, scarce espied:

'Mid hush'd, cool-rooted flowers, fra-  
grant-eyed,

Blue, silver-white, and budded Tyrian,  
They lay calm-breathing on the bedded  
grass;

Their arms embraced, and their pinions  
too;

Their lips touch'd not, but had not  
bade adieu,

As if disjoined by soft-handed slumber,  
And ready still past kisses to outnumber  
At tender eye-dawn of aureoan love:

The winged boy I knew;

But who wast thou, O happy, happy  
dove?

His Psyche true!

O latest born and loveliest vision far  
Of all Olympus' faded hierarchy!

Fairer than Phœbe's sapphire-region'd  
star,

Or Vesper, amorous glow-worm of the  
sky;

Fairer than these, though temple thou  
hast none,

Nor altar heap'd with flowers;

Nor virgin-choir to make delicious moan  
Upon the midnight hours;

No voice, no lute, no pipe, no incense  
sweet

From chain-swung censer teeming;

No shrine, no grove, no oracle, no heat  
Of pale-mouth'd prophet dreaming.

O brightest! though too late for antique  
 vows,  
 Too, too late for the fond believing  
 lyre,  
 When holy were the haunted forest  
 boughs,  
 Holy the air, the water, and the fire;  
 Yet even in these days so far retir'd  
 From happy pieties, thy lucent fans,  
 Fluttering among the faint Olympians,  
 I see, and sing, by my own eyes in-  
 spired.  
 So let me be thy choir, and make a  
 moan  
 Upon the midnight hours;  
 Thy voice, thy lute, thy pipe, thy incense  
 sweet  
 From winged censer teeming;  
 Thy shrine, thy grove, thy oracle, thy  
 heat  
 Of pale-mouth'd prophet dreaming.

Yes, I will be thy priest, and build a  
 fane  
 In some untrodden region of my mind,  
 Where branched thoughts, new grown  
 with pleasant pain,  
 Instead of pines shall murmur in the  
 wind:  
 Far, far around shall those dark-cluster'd  
 trees  
 Fledge the wild-ridged mountains steep  
 by steep;  
 And there by zephyrs, streams, and birds,  
 and bees,  
 The moss-lain Dryads shall be lull'd to  
 sleep;  
 And in the midst of this wide quiet-  
 ness  
 A rosy sanctuary will I dress  
 With the wreath'd trellis of a working  
 brain,  
 With buds, and bells, and stars without  
 a name,  
 With all the gardener Fancy e'er could  
 feign,  
 Who breeding flowers, will never breed  
 the same:  
 And there shall be for thee all soft de-  
 light  
 That shadowy thought can win,  
 A bright torch, and a casement ope at  
 night,  
 To let the warm Love in!

*April, 1819. 1820.*

### ODE ON A GRECIAN URN

THOU still unravish'd bride of quietness,  
 Thou foster-child of silence and slow  
 time,  
 Sylvan historian, who canst thus ex-  
 press  
 A flowery tale more sweetly than our  
 rhyme:  
 What leaf-fring'd legend haunts about  
 thy shape  
 Of deities or mortals, or of both,  
 In Tempe or the dales of Arcady?  
 What men or gods are these? What  
 maidens loth?  
 What mad pursuit? What struggle to  
 escape?  
 What pipes and timbrels? What  
 wild ecstasy?

Heard melodies are sweet, but those un-  
 heard  
 Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes,  
 play on;  
 Not to the sensual ear, but, more en-  
 dear'd,  
 Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone:  
 Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst  
 not leave  
 Thy song, nor ever can those trees be  
 bare;  
 Bold Lover, never, never canst thou  
 kiss  
 Though winning near the goal — yet, do  
 not grieve;  
 She cannot fade, though thou hast not  
 thy bliss,  
 For ever wilt thou love, and she be  
 fair!

Ah, happy, happy boughs! that cannot  
 shed  
 Your leaves, nor ever bid the Spring  
 adieu;  
 And, happy melodist, unwearied,  
 For ever piping songs for ever new;  
 More happy love! more happy, happy  
 love!  
 For ever warm and still to be enjoy'd,  
 For ever panting, and for ever young;  
 All breathing human passion far above,  
 That leaves a heart high-sorrowful and  
 cloy'd,  
 A burning forehead, and a parching  
 tongue.



Who are these coming to the sacrifice?  
 To what green altar, O mysterious  
 priest,  
 Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the  
 skies,  
 And all her silken flanks with garlands  
 dressed?  
 What little town by river or seashore,  
 Or mountain-built with peaceful cit-  
 adel,  
 Is emptied of this folk, this pious  
 morn?  
 And, little town, thy streets for ever-  
 more?  
 Will silent be; and not a soul to tell  
 Why thou art desolate, can e'er re-  
 turn.

O Attic shape! Fair attitude! with  
 brede  
 Of marble men and maidens over-  
 wrought,  
 With forest branches and the trodden  
 weed;  
 Thou, silent form, dost tease us out of  
 thought  
 As doth eternity: Cold Pastoral!  
 When old age shall this generation  
 waste,  
 Thou shalt remain, in midst of other  
 woe  
 Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou  
 say'st,  
 "Beauty is truth, truth beauty,"—  
 that is all  
 Ye know on earth, and all ye need  
 to know.

1819. January, 1820.

#### ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness  
 pains  
 My sense, as though of hemlock I had  
 drunk,  
 Or emptied some dull opiate to the  
 drains  
 One minute past, and Lethe-wards had  
 sunk:  
 'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,  
 But being too happy in thine happi-  
 ness.—  
 That thou, light winged Dryad of the  
 trees,  
 In some melodious plot

Of beechen green, and shadows num-  
 berless,  
 Singest of summer in full-throated  
 ease.

O, for a draught of vintage! that hath  
 been  
 Cool'd a long age in the deep-delved  
 earth,  
 Tasting of Flora and the country green,  
 Dance, and Provençal song, and sun-  
 burnt mirth!  
 O for a beaker full of the warm South,  
 Full of the true, the blushful Hippo-  
 crene,  
 With beaded bubbles winking at the  
 brim,  
 And purple-stained mouth;  
 That I might drink, and leave the world  
 unseen,  
 And with thee fade away into the  
 forest dim:

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget  
 What thou among the leaves hast never  
 known,  
 The weariness, the fever, and the fret  
 Here, where men sit and hear each  
 other groan;  
 Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray  
 hairs,  
 Where youth grows pale, and spectre-  
 thin, and dies;  
 Where but to think is to be full of  
 sorrow  
 And leaden-eyed despairs,  
 Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous  
 eyes,  
 Or new Love pine at them beyond  
 to-morrow.

Away! away! for I will fly to thee,  
 Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,  
 But on the viewless wings of Poesy,  
 Though the dull brain perplexes and  
 retards:  
 Already with thee! tender is the night,  
 And haply the Queen-Moon is on her  
 throne,  
 Cluster'd around by all her starry  
 Fays;  
 But here there is no light,  
 Save what from heaven is with the  
 breezes blown  
 Through verdurous glooms and wind-  
 ing mossy ways.

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,  
 Nor what soft incense hangs upon the  
 boughs,  
 But, in embalmed darkness, guess each  
 sweet  
 Wherewith the seasonable month en-  
 dows  
 The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree  
 wild;  
 White hawthorn, and the pastoral  
 eglantine;  
 Fast fading violets cover'd up in  
 leaves;  
 And mid-May's eldest child,  
 The coming musk-rose, full of dewy  
 wine,  
 The murmurous haunt of flies on  
 summer eves.

Darkling I listen; and, for many a time  
 I have been half in love with easeful  
 Death,  
 Call'd him soft names in many a mused  
 rhyme,  
 To take into the air my quiet breath;  
 Now more than ever seems it rich to die,  
 To cease upon the midnight with no  
 pain,  
 While thou art pouring forth thy  
 soul abroad  
 In such an ecstasy!  
 Still wouldst thou sing, and I have  
 ears in vain —  
 To thy high requiem become a sod.

Thou wast not born for death, immortal  
 Bird!  
 No hungry generations tread thee  
 down;  
 The voice I hear this passing night was  
 heard  
 In ancient days by emperor and clown:  
 Perhaps the self-same song that found a  
 path  
 Through the sad heart of Ruth, when,  
 sick for home,  
 She stood in tears amid the alien corn;  
 The same that oft-times hath  
 Charm'd magic casements, opening on  
 the foam  
 Of perilous seas, in faery lands for-  
 lorn.

Forlorn! the very word is like a bell  
 To toll me back from thee to my sole  
 self!

Adieu! the fancy cannot cheat so well  
 As she is fam'd to do, deceiving elf.  
 Adieu! adieu! thy plaintive anthem  
 fades  
 Past the near meadows, over the still  
 stream,  
 Up the hill-side; and now 'tis buried  
 deep  
 In the next valley-glades:  
 Was it a vision, or a waking dream?  
 Fled is that music: — Do I wake or  
 sleep? *May, 1819. July, 1819.*

### ODE ON MELANCHOLY

No, no, go not to Lethe, neither twist  
 Wolf's-bane, tight-rooted, for its poi-  
 sonous wine;  
 Nor suffer thy pale forehead to be kiss'd  
 By nightshade, ruby grape of Proser-  
 pine;  
 Make not your rosary of yew-berries,  
 Nor let the beetle, nor the death-moth  
 be  
 Your mournful Psyche, nor the  
 downy owl  
 A partner in your sorrow's mysteries;  
 For shade to shade will come too drows-  
 ily,  
 And drown the wakeful anguish of  
 the soul.

But when the melancholy fit shall fall  
 Sudden from heaven like a weeping  
 cloud,  
 That fosters the droop-headed flowers all,  
 And hides the green hill in an April  
 shroud;  
 Then glut thy sorrow on a morning rose,  
 Or on the rainbow of the salt sand-  
 wave,  
 Or on the wealth of globed peonies;  
 Or if thy mistress some rich anger shows,  
 Emprison her soft hand, and let her  
 rave,  
 And feed deep, deep upon her peer-  
 less eyes.

She dwells with Beauty — Beauty that  
 must die;  
 And Joy, whose hand is ever at his  
 lips  
 Bidding adieu; and aching Pleasure nigh,  
 Turning to poison while the bee-mouth  
 sips:

Ay, in the very temple of Delight  
 Veil'd Melancholy has her sovran  
 shrine,  
 Though seen of none save him whose  
 strenuous tongue  
 Can burst Joy's grape against his palate  
 fine:  
 His soul shall taste the sadness of her  
 might,  
 And be among her cloudy trophies  
 hung. 1819. 1820.

## TO AUTUMN

SEASON of mists and mellow fruitfulness,  
 Close bosom-friend of the maturing  
 sun;  
 Conspiring with him how to load and  
 bless  
 With fruit the vines that round the  
 thatch-eves run;  
 To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-  
 trees,  
 And fill all fruit with ripeness to the  
 core;  
 To swell the gourd, and plump the  
 hazel shells  
 With a sweet kernel; to set budding  
 more,  
 And still more, later flowers for the  
 bees,  
 Until they think warm days will never  
 cease,  
 For Summer has o'er-brimm'd their  
 clammy cells.

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy  
 store?  
 Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may  
 find  
 Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,  
 Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing  
 wind;  
 Or on a half-reap'd furrow sound asleep,  
 Drows'd with the fume of poppies,  
 while thy hook  
 Spares the next swath and all its  
 twined flowers:  
 And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost  
 keep  
 Steady thy laden head across a brook;  
 Or by a cider-press, with patient  
 look,  
 Thou watchest the last oozyngs hours  
 by hours.

Where are the songs of Spring? Ay,  
 where are they?

Think not of them, thou hast thy  
 music too, —  
 While barred clouds bloom the soft-  
 dying day,  
 And touch the stubble-plains with rosy  
 hue;  
 Then in a wailful choir the small gnats  
 mourn  
 Among the river shallows, borne aloft  
 Or sinking as the light wind lives or  
 dies;  
 And full-grown lambs loud bleat from  
 hilly bourn;  
 Hedge-cricket sing; and now with  
 treble soft  
 The red-breast whistles from a garden-  
 croft;  
 And gathering swallows twitter in  
 the skies.

*September 1819. 1820*

## HYPERION

## A FRAGMENT

## BOOK I

DEEP in the shady sadness of a vale  
 Far sunken from the healthy breath of  
 morn,  
 Far from the fiery noon, and eve's one  
 star,  
 Sat gray-hair'd Saturn, quiet as a stone,  
 Still as the silence round about his lair;  
 Forest on forest hung about his head  
 Like cloud on cloud. No stir of air was  
 there,  
 Not so much life as on a summer's day  
 Robs not one light seed from the feather'd  
 grass,  
 But where the dead leaf fell, there did it  
 rest.  
 A stream went voiceless by, still deadened  
 more  
 By reason of his fallen divinity  
 Spreading a shade: the Naiad 'mid her  
 reeds  
 Press'd her cold finger closer to her lips.

Along the margin-sand large foot-  
 marks went,  
 No further than to where his feet had  
 stray'd,

And slept there since. Upon the sodden  
ground  
His old right hand lay nerveless, listless,  
dead,  
Unscathed; and his realmless eyes were  
closed;  
While his bow'd head seem'd list'ning to  
the Earth,  
His ancient mother, for some comfort  
yet.

It seem'd no force could wake him from  
his place;  
But there came one, who with a kindred  
hand  
Touch'd his wide shoulders, after bending  
low  
With reverence, though to one who knew  
it not.

She was a Goddess of the infant world;  
By her in stature the tall Amazon  
Had stood a pigmy's height: she would  
have ta'en  
Achilles by the hair and bent his neck;  
Or with a finger stay'd Ixion's wheel.  
Her face was large as that of Memphian  
sphinx,

Pedestal'd haply in a palace court,  
When sages look'd to Egypt for their  
lore.

But oh! how unlike marble was that  
face:

How beautiful, if sorrow had not made  
Sorrow more beautiful than Beauty's  
self.

There was a listening fear in her regard,  
As if calamity had but begun:

As if the vanward clouds of evil days  
Had spent their malice, and the sullen  
rear

Was with its stored thunder laboring up.  
One hand she press'd upon that aching  
spot

Where beats the human heart, as if just  
there,

Though an immortal, she felt cruel pain;  
The other upon Saturn's bended neck  
She laid, and to the level of his ear  
Leaning with parted lips, some words she  
spoke

In solemn tenor and deep organ tone:  
Some mourning words, which in our  
feeble tongue

Would come in these like accents; O how  
frail

To that large utterance of the early Gods!

"Saturn, look up!— though wherefore,  
poor old King?

I have no comfort for thee, no not one:  
I cannot say, 'O wherefore sleepest  
thou?'

For heaven is parted from thee, and the  
earth

Knows thee not, thus afflicted, for a God;  
And ocean too, with all its solemn noise,  
Has from thy sceptre pass'd; and all the  
air

Is emptied of thine hoary majesty.

Thy thunder, conscious of the new com-  
mand,

Rumbles reluctant o'er our fallen house:  
And thy sharp lightning in unpractised  
hands

Scorches and burns our once serene  
domain.

O aching time! O moments big as years!  
All as ye pass swell out the monstrous  
truth,

And press it so upon our weary griefs  
That unbelief has not a space to breathe.  
Saturn, sleep on:— O thoughtless, why  
did I

Thus violate thy slumbrous solitude?

Why should I ope thy melancholy eyes?

Saturn, sleep on! while at thy feet I  
weep."

As when, upon a tranced summer-  
night,

Those green-rob'd senators of mighty  
woods,

Tall oaks, branch-charmed by the earnest  
stars,

Dream, and so dream all night without a  
stir,

Save from one gradual solitary gust

Which comes upon the silence, and dies  
off,

As if the ebbing air had but one wave;

So came these words and went; the while  
in tears

She touch'd her fair large forehead to the  
ground,

Just where her falling hair might be out-  
spread

A soft and silken mat for Saturn's feet.

One moon, with alteration slow, had shed

Her silver seasons four upon the night,

And still these two were postured motion-  
less,

Like natural sculpture in cathedral cav-  
ern;

The frozen God still couchant on the  
earth,  
And the sad Goddess weeping at his feet :  
Until at length old Saturn lifted up  
His faded eyes, and saw his kingdom gone,  
And all the gloom and sorrow of the place,  
And that fair kneeling Goddess; and  
then spake,  
As with a palsied tongue, and while his  
beard

Shook horrid with such aspen-malady :  
"O tender spouse of gold Hyperion,  
Thea, I feel thee ere I see thy face;  
Look up, and let me see our doom in it;  
Look up, and tell me if this feeble shape  
Is Saturn's; tell me, if thou hear'st the  
voice

Of Saturn; tell me, if this wrinkling brow,  
Naked and bare of its great diadem,  
Peers like the front of Saturn. Who had  
power

To make me desolate? whence came the  
strength?

How was it nurtur'd to such bursting  
forth,

While Fate seem'd strangled in my nerv-  
ous grasp?

But it is so; and I am smother'd up,  
And buried from all godlike exercise  
Of influence benign on planets pale,  
Of admonitions to the winds and seas,  
Of peaceful sway above man's harvesting,  
And all those acts which Deity supreme  
Doth ease its heart of love in.— I am  
gone

Away from my own bosom: I have left  
My strong identity, my real self,  
Somewhere between the throne, and  
where I sit

Here on this spot of earth. Search, Thea,  
search!

Open thine eyes eterne, and sphere them  
round

Upon all space: space starr'd, and lorn  
of light;

Space region'd with life-air; and barren  
void;

Spaces of fire, and all the yawn of hell.—  
Search, Thea, search! and tell me, if thou  
seest

A certain shape of shadow, making way  
With wings or chariot fierce to repossess  
A heaven he lost erewhile: it must—it  
must

Be of ripe progress—Saturn must be  
King.

Yes, there must be a golden victory;  
There must be Gods thrown down, and  
trumpets blown

Of triumph calm, and hymns of festival  
Upon the gold clouds metropolitan,  
Voices of soft proclaim, and silver stir  
Of strings in hollow shells; and there  
shall be

Beautiful things made new, for the sur-  
prise

Of the sky-children; I will give com-  
mand:

Thea! Thea! Thea! where is Saturn?"

This passion lifted him upon his feet,  
And made his hands to struggle in the air,  
His Druid locks to shake and ooze with  
sweat,

His eyes to fever out, his voice to cease.  
He stood, and heard not Thea's sobbing  
deep;

A little time, and then again he snatch'd  
Utterance thus.—"But cannot I create?  
Cannot I form? Cannot I fashion forth  
Another world, another universe,  
To overbear and crumble this to nought?  
Where is another chaos? Where?"—

That word

Found way unto Olympus, and made  
quake

The rebel three.—Thea was startled up,  
And in her bearing was a sort of hope,  
As thus she quick-voic'd spake, yet full of  
awe.

"This cheer our fallen house: come to  
our friends,

O Saturn! come away, and give them  
heart;

I know the covert, for thence came I  
hither."

Thus brief; then with beseeching eyes  
she went

With backward footing through the shade  
a space:

He follow'd, and she turn'd to lead the  
way

Through aged boughs, that yielded like  
the mist

Which eagles cleave upmounting from  
their nest.

Meanwhile in other realms big tears  
were shed,

More sorrow like to this, and such like woe,  
Too huge for mortal tongue or pen of  
scribe:



The Titans fierce, self-hid, or prison-bound,

Groan'd for the old allegiance once more,  
And listen'd in sharp pain for Saturn's voice.

But one of the whole mammoth-brood still kept

His sov'reignty, and rule, and majesty; —  
Blazing Hyperion on his orb'd fire

Still sat, still snuff'd the incense, teeming up

From man to the sun's God; yet unsecure:

For as among us mortals omens drear  
Fright and perplex, so also shuddered he —

Not at dog's howl, or gloom-bird's hated screech,

Or the familiar visiting of one

Upon the first toll of his passing-bell,

Or prophesyings of the midnight lamp;

But horrors, portion'd to a giant nerve,  
Oft made Hyperion ache. His palace bright

Bastion'd with pyramids of glowing gold,  
And touch'd with shade of bronzed obelisks,

Glar'd a blood-red through all its thousand courts,

Arches, and domes, and fiery galleries;  
And all its curtains of Aurorian clouds

Flush'd angerly: while sometimes eagle's wings,

Unseen before by Gods or wondering men,  
Darken'd the place; and neighing steeds

were heard,  
Not heard before by Gods or wondering men.

Also, when he would taste the spicy wreaths

Of incense, breath'd aloft from sacred hills,

Instead of sweets, his ample palate took  
Savor of poisonous brass and metal sick:

And so, when harbor'd in the sleepy west,  
After the full completion of fair day, —

For rest divine upon exalted couch  
And slumber in the arms of melody,

He pac'd away the pleasant hours of ease  
With stride colossal, on from hall to hall;

While far within each aisle and deep recess,

His winged minions in close clusters stood,  
Amaz'd and full of fear; like anxious men

Who on wide plains gather in panting troops,

When earthquakes jar their battlements  
and towers.

Even now, while Saturn, rous'd from icy trance,

Went step for step with Thea through the woods,

Hyperion, leaving twilight in the rear,  
Came slope upon the threshold of the west;

Then, as was wont, his palace-door flew ope

In smoothest silence, save what solemn tubes,

Blown by the serious Zephyrs, gave of sweet

And wandering sounds, slow-breathed melodies;

And like a rose in vermeil tint and shape,  
In fragrance soft, and coolness to the eye,

That inlet to severe magnificence  
Stood full blown, for the God to enter in.

He enter'd, but he enter'd full of wrath;  
His flaming robes stream'd out beyond his heels,

And gave a roar, as if of earthly fire,  
That scar'd away the meek ethereal Hours

And made their dove-wings tremble.  
On he flared,

From stately nave to nave, from vault to vault,

Through bowers of fragrant and enwreathed light,

And diamond-paved lustrous long arcades,

Until he reach'd the great main cupola;  
There standing fierce beneath, he stamped

his foot,  
And from the basements deep to the high towers

Jarr'd his own golden region; and before  
The quavering thunder thereupon had

ceas'd,  
His voice leapt out, despite of godlike curb,

To this result: "O dreams of day and night!

O monstrous forms! O effigies of pain!  
O spectres busy in a cold, cold gloom!

O lank-ear'd Phantoms of black-weeded pools!

Why do I know ye? why have I seen ye? why

Is my eternal essence thus distraught  
To see and to behold these horrors new?

Saturn is fallen, am I too to fall?  
 Am I to leave this haven of my rest,  
 This cradle of my glory, this soft clime,  
 This calm luxuriance of blissful light,  
 These crystalline pavilions, and pure fanes,  
 Of all my lucent empire? It is left  
 Deserted, void, nor any haunt of mine.  
 The blaze, the splendor, and the sym-  
 metry,  
 I cannot see — but darkness, death and  
 darkness.

Even here, into my centre of repose,  
 The shady visions come to domineer,  
 Insult, and blind, and stifle up my  
 pomp. —

Fall! — No, by Tellus and her briny  
 robes!

Over the fiery frontier of my realms  
 I will advance a terrible right arm  
 Shall scare that infant thunderer, rebel

Jove,  
 And bid old Saturn take his throne  
 again." —

He spake, and ceas'd, the while a heavier  
 threat

Held struggle with his throat but came  
 not forth;

For as in theatres of crowded men  
 Hubbub increases more they call out  
 "Hush!"

So at Hyperion's words the Phantoms pale  
 Bestirr'd themselves, thrice horrible and  
 cold;

And from the mirror'd level where he  
 stood

A mist arose, as from a scummy marsh.  
 At this, through all his bulk an agony  
 Crept gradual, from the feet unto the  
 crown.

Like a lithe serpent vast and muscular  
 Making slow way, with head and neck  
 convuls'd

From over-strained might. Releas'd, he  
 fled

To the eastern gates, and full six dewy  
 hours

Before the dawn in season due should  
 blush,

He breath'd fierce breath against the  
 sleepy portals,

Clear'd them of heavy vapors, burst them  
 wide

Suddenly on the ocean's chilly streams.  
 The planet orb of fire, whereon he rode  
 Each day from east to west the heavens  
 through,

Spun round in sable curtaining of clouds :  
 Not therefore veiled quite, blindfold, and  
 hid,

But ever and anon the glancing spheres,  
 Circles, and arcs, and broad-belted  
 colure,

Glow'd through, and wrought upon the  
 muffling dark

Sweet-shaped lightnings from the nadir  
 deep

Up to the zenith, — hieroglyphics old,  
 Which sages and keen-eyed astrologers  
 Then living on the earth, with laboring  
 thought

Won from the gaze of many centuries :  
 Now lost, save what we find on remnants  
 huge

Of stone, or marble swart; their import  
 gone,

Their wisdom long since fled. — Two  
 wings this orb

Possess'd for glory, two fair argent wings,  
 Ever exalted at the God's approach :

And now, from forth the gloom their  
 plumes immense

Rose, one by one, till all outspreaded  
 were;

While still the dazzling globe maintain'd  
 eclipse,

Awaiting for Hyperion's command.

Fain would he have commanded, fain  
 took throne

And bid the day begin, if but for change.  
 He might not : — No, though a primeval  
 God :

The sacred seasons might not be dis-  
 turb'd.

Therefore the operations of the dawn  
 Stay'd in their birth, even as here 'tis  
 told.

Those silver wings expanded sisterly,  
 Eager to sail their orb; the porches wide  
 Open'd upon the dusk demesnes of night,  
 And the bright Titan, phrenzied with  
 new woes,

Unus'd to bend, by hard compulsion bent  
 His spirit to the sorrow of the time;

And all along a dismal rack of clouds,

Upon the boundaries of day and night,  
 He stretch'd himself in grief and radiance

faint.

There as he lay, the Heaven with its  
 stars

Look'd down on him with pity, and the  
 voice

Of Cœlus, from the universal space,

Thus whisper'd low and solemn in his ear.  
 "O brightest of my children dear, earth-born

And sky-engendered, Son of Mysteries  
 All unrevealed even to the powers  
 Which met at thy creating; at whose joy  
 And palpitations sweet, and pleasures soft,

I, Cœlus, wonder, how they came and whence;

And at the fruits thereof what shapes they be,

Distinct, and visible; symbols divine,  
 Manifestations of that beauteous life  
 Diffus'd unseen throughout eternal space;  
 Of these new-form'd art thou, oh brightest child!

Of these, thy brethren and the Goddesses!

There is sad feud among ye, and rebellion

Of son against his sire. I saw him fall,  
 I saw my first-born tumbled from his throne!

To me his arms were spread, to me his voice

Found way from forth the thunders round his head!

Pale wax I and in vapors hid my face.  
 Art thou, too, near such doom? vague fear there is:

For I have seen my sons most unlike Gods.

Divine ye were created, and divine  
 In sad demeanor, solemn, undisturb'd,  
 Unruffled, like high Gods, ye liv'd and ruled:

Now I behold in you fear, hope, and wrath;

Actions of rage and passion; even as  
 I see them, on the mortal world beneath,  
 In men who die.—This is the grief, O Son!

Sad sign of ruin, sudden dismay, and fall!  
 Yet do thou strive; as thou art capable,  
 As thou canst move about, an evident God;

And canst oppose to each malignant hour  
 Ethereal presence:—I am but a voice;  
 My life is but the life of winds and tides,  
 No more than winds and tides can I avail:—

But thou canst.—Be thou therefore in the van

Of circumstance; yea, seize the arrow's barb

Before the tense string murmur.—To the earth!

For there thou wilt find Saturn, and his woes.

Meantime I will keep watch on thy bright sun,

And of thy seasons be a careful nurse."—  
 Ere half this region-whisper had come down,

Hyperion arose, and on the stars  
 Lifted his curved lids, and kept them wide

Until it ceas'd; and still he kept them wide:

And still they were the same bright, patient stars.

Then with a slow incline of his broad breast,

Like to a diver in the pearly seas,  
 Forward he stoop'd over the airy shore,  
 And plung'd all noiseless into the deep night.

## BOOK II

JUST at the self-same beat of Time's wide wings

Hyperion slid into the rustled air,  
 And Saturn gain'd with Thea that sad place

Where Cybele and the bruised Titans mourn'd.

It was a den where no insulting light  
 Could glimmer on their tears; where their own groans

They felt, but heard not, for the solid roar

Of thunderous water falls and torrents hoarse,

Pouring a constant bulk, uncertain where  
 Crag jutting forth to crag, and rocks that seem'd

Ever as if just rising from a sleep,  
 Forehead to forehead held their monstrous horns;

And thus in thousand hugest phantasies  
 Made a fit roofing to this nest of woe.

Instead of thrones, hard flint they sat upon,

Couches of rugged stone, and slaty ridge  
 Stubborn'd with iron. All were not assembled:

Some chain'd in torture, and some wandering.

Cœus, and Gyges, and Briareüs,  
 Typhon, and Dolor, and Porphyryon,

With many more, the brawniest in assault,  
 Were pent in regions of laborious breath;  
 Dungeon'd in opaque element, to keep  
 Their clenched teeth still clench'd, and  
 all their limbs  
 Lock'd up like veins of metal, cramped and  
 screw'd;  
 Without a motion, save of their big hearts  
 Heaving in pain, and horribly convuls'd  
 With sanguine feverous boiling gurge of  
 pulse.  
 Mnemosyne was straying in the world;  
 Far from her moon had Phœbe wander'd;  
 And many else were free to roam abroad,  
 But for the main, here found they covert  
 drear.  
 Scarce images of life, one here, one there,  
 Lay vast and edgeways; like a dismal  
 cirque  
 Of Druid stones, upon a forlorn moor,  
 When the chill rain begins at shut of eve,  
 In dull November, and their chancel  
 vault,  
 The Heaven itself, is blinded throughout  
 night.  
 Each one kept shroud, nor to his neighbor  
 gave  
 Or word, or look, or action of despair.  
 Creüs was one; his ponderous iron mace  
 Lay by him, and a shatter'd rib of rock  
 Told of his rage, ere he thus sank and  
 pined.  
 Iäpetus another; in his grasp,  
 A serpent's plashy neck; its barbed  
 tongue  
 Squeez'd from the gorge, and all its  
 uncurl'd length  
 Dead; and because the creature could  
 not spit  
 Its poison in the eyes of conquering  
 Jove.  
 Next Cottus: prone he lay, chin upper-  
 most,  
 As though in pain; for still upon the  
 flint  
 He ground severe his skull, with open  
 mouth  
 And eyes at horrid working. Nearest  
 him  
 Asia, born of most enormous Caf,  
 Who cost her mother Tellus keener pangs,  
 Though feminine, than any of her sons:  
 More thought than woe was in her dusky  
 face,

For she was prophesying of her glory;  
 And in her wide imagination stood  
 Palm-shaded temples, and high rival  
 fanes,  
 By Oxus or in Ganges' sacred isles.  
 Even as Hope upon her anchor leans,  
 So leant she, not so fair, upon a tusk  
 Shed from the broadest of her elephants.  
 Above her, on a crag's uneasy shelf,  
 Upon his elbow rais'd, all prostrate else,  
 Shadow'd Enceladus; once tame and  
 mild  
 As grazing ox unworried in the meads;  
 Now tiger-passion'd, lion-thoughted,  
 wroth,  
 He meditated, plotted, and even now  
 Was hurling mountains in that second  
 war,  
 Not long delay'd, that scar'd the younger  
 Gods  
 To hide themselves in forms of beast and  
 bird.  
 Nor far hence Atlas; and beside him  
 prone  
 Phorcus, the sire of Gorgons. Neighbor'd close  
 Oceanus, and Tethys, in whose lap  
 Sob'd Clymene among her tangled hair.  
 In midst of all lay Themis, at the feet  
 Of Ops the queen all clouded round from  
 sight;  
 No shape distinguishable, more than when  
 Thick night confounds the pine-tops with  
 the clouds:  
 And many else whose names may not be  
 told.  
 For when the Muse's wings are air-ward  
 spread,  
 Who shall delay her flight? And she  
 must chant  
 Of Saturn, and his guide, who now had  
 climb'd  
 With damp and slippery footing from a  
 depth  
 More horrid still. Above a sombre cliff  
 Their heads appear'd, and up their  
 stature grew  
 Till on the level height their steps found  
 ease:  
 Then Thea spread abroad her trembling  
 arms  
 Upon the precincts of this nest of pain,  
 And sidelong fix'd her eye on Saturn's  
 face:  
 There saw she direst strife; the supreme  
 God

At war with all the frailty of grief,  
Of rage, of fear, anxiety, revenge,  
Remorse, spleen, hope, but most of all  
despair.

Against these plagues he strove in vain;  
for Fate

Had pour'd a mortal oil upon his head,  
A disanointing poison: so that Thea,  
Affrighted, kept her still, and let him pass  
First onwards in, among the fallen tribe.

As with us mortal men, the laden heart  
Is persecuted more, and fever'd more,  
When it is nighing to the mournful house  
Where other hearts are sick of the same  
bruise;

So Saturn, as he walk'd in the midst,  
Felt faint, and would have sunk among  
the rest,

But that he met Enceladus's eye,  
Whose mightiness, and awe of him, at  
once

Came like an inspiration; and he shouted,  
"Titans, behold your God!" at which  
some groan'd;

Some started on their feet; some also  
shouted;

Some wept, some wail'd, all bow'd with  
reverence;

And Ops, uplifting her black folded veil,  
Show'd her pale cheeks, and all her fore-  
head wan,

Her eye-brows thin and jet, and hollow  
eyes.

There is a roaring in the bleak-grown  
pines

When Winter lifts his voice; there is a  
noise

Among immortals when a God gives sign,  
With hushing finger, how he means to  
load

His tongue with the full weight of utter-  
less thought,

With thunder, and with music, and with  
pomp:

Such noise is like the roar of bleak-grown  
pines;

Which, when it ceases in this mountain'd  
world,

No other sound succeeds; but ceasing  
here,

Among these fallen, Saturn's voice there-  
from

Grew up like organ, that begins anew  
Its strain, when other harmonies, stopt  
short,

Leave the dinn'd air vibrating silverly.  
Thus grew it up — "Not in my own sad  
breast,

Which is its own great judge and searcher  
out,

Can I find reason why ye should be thus:  
Not in the legends of the first of days,  
Studied from that old spirit-leaved book  
Which starry Uranus with finger bright  
Sav'd from the shores of darkness, when  
the waves

Low-ebb'd still hid it up in shallow  
gloom; —

And the which book ye know I ever kept  
For my firm-based footstool: — Ah, in-  
firm!

Not there, nor in sign, symbol, or portent  
Of element, earth, water, air, and fire, —  
At war, at peace, or inter-quarrelling  
One against one, or two, or three, or all  
Each several one against the other three,  
As fire with air loud warring when rain-  
floods

Drown both, and press them both against  
earth's face,

Where, finding sulphur, a quadruple  
wrath

Unhinges the poor world; — not in that  
strife,

Wherefrom I take strange lore, and read it  
deep,

Can I find reason why ye should be thus;  
No, no-where can unriddle, though I  
search, —

And pore on Nature's universal scroll  
Even to swooning, why ye, Divinities,  
The first-born of all shap'd and palpable  
Gods,

Should cower beneath what, in compari-  
son,

Is untremendous might. Yet ye are  
here,

O'erwhelm'd and spurn'd, and batter'd,  
ye are here!

O Titans, shall I say 'Arise!' — Ye  
groan:

Shall I say 'Crouch!' — Ye groan. What  
can I then?

O Heaven wide! O unseen parent dear!  
What can I! Tell me, all ye brethren  
Gods,

How we can war, how engine our great  
wrath!

O speak your counsel now, for Saturn's  
ear

Is all a-hunger'd. Thou, Oceanus,



Ponderest high and deep; and in thy face  
I see, astonied, that severe content  
Which comes of thought and musing;  
give us help!"

So ended Saturn; and the God of the  
Sea,  
Sophist and sage, from no Athenian grove,  
But cogitation in his watery shades,  
Arose, with locks not oozy, and began,  
In murmurs, which his first-endeavoring  
tongue

Caught infant-like from the far foamed  
sands.

"O ye, whom wrath consumes! who,  
passion-stung,

Writhe at defeat, and nurse your agonies!  
Shut up your senses, stifle up your ears,  
My voice is not a bellows unto ire.

Yet listen, ye who will, whilst I bring  
proof

How ye, perforce, must be content to  
stoop;

And in the proof much comfort will I  
give,

If ye will take that comfort in its truth.  
We fall by course of Nature's law, not  
force

Of thunder, or of Jove. Great Saturn,  
thou

Hast sifted well the atom-universe;  
But for this reason, that thou art the  
King,

And only blind from sheer supremacy,  
One avenue was shaded from thine eyes,  
Through which I wandered to eternal  
truth.

And first, as thou wast not the first of  
powers,

So art thou not the last; it cannot be:  
Thou art not the beginning nor the end.  
From chaos and parental darkness came  
Light, the first fruits of that intestine  
broil,

That sullen ferment, which for wondrous  
ends

Was ripening in itself. The ripe hour  
came,

And with it light, and light, engendering  
Upon its own producer, forthwith touch'd  
The whole enormous matter into life.

Upon that very hour, our parentage,  
The Heavens and the Earth, were mani-  
fest:

Then thou first-born, and we the giant-  
race,

Found ourselves ruling new and beau-  
teous realms.

Now comes the pain of truth, to whom  
'tis pain;

O folly! for to bear all naked truths,  
And to envisage circumstance, all calm,  
That is the top of sovereignty. Mark  
well!

As Heaven and Earth are fairer, fairer far  
Than Chaos and blank Darkness, though  
once chiefs;

And as we show beyond that Heaven and  
Earth

In form and shape compact and beautiful,  
In will, in action free, companionship,  
And thousand other signs of purer life;  
So on our heels a fresh perfection treads,  
A power more strong in beauty, born of  
us

And fated to excel us, as we pass  
In glory that old Darkness: nor are we  
Thereby more conquer'd, than by us the  
rule

Of shapeless Chaos. Say, doth the dull  
soil

Quarrel with the proud forests it hath  
fed,

And feedeth still, more comely than itself?  
Can it deny the chieftom of green groves?  
Or shall the tree be envious of the dove  
Because it cooeth, and hath snowy wings  
To wander wherewithal and find its joys?  
We are such forest-trees, and our fair  
boughs

Have bred forth, not pale solitary doves,  
But eagles golden-feather'd, who do tower  
Above us in their beauty, and must reign  
In right thereof; for 'tis the eternal law  
That first in beauty should be first in  
might;

Yea, by that law, another race may drive  
Our conquerors to mourn as we do now.  
Have ye beheld the young God of the  
Seas,

My disposessor? Have ye seen his face?  
Have ye beheld his chariot, foam'd along  
By noble winged creatures he hath made?  
I saw him on the calmed waters scud,  
With such a glow of beauty in his eyes,  
That it enforc'd me to bid sad farewell  
To all my empire: farewell sad I took,  
And hither came, to see how dolorous  
fate

Had wrought upon ye; and how I might  
best

Give consolation in this woe extreme.

Receive the truth, and let it be your balm."

Whether through poz'd conviction, or disdain,

They guarded silence, when Oceanus Left murmuring, what deepest thought can tell?

But so it was, none answer'd for a space, Save one whom none regarded, Clymene; And yet she answer'd not, only complain'd,

With hectic lips, and eyes up-looking mild,

Thus wording timidly among the fierce: "O Father, I am here the simplest voice, And all my knowledge is that joy is gone, And this thing we crept in among our hearts,

There to remain for ever, as I fear:

I would not bode of evil, if I thought

So weak a creature could turn off the help Which by just right should come of mighty Gods;

Yet let me tell my sorrow, let me tell Of what I heard, and how it made me weep,

And know that we had parted from all hope.

I stood upon a shore, a pleasant shore, Where a sweet clime was breathed from a land

Of fragrance, quietness, and trees, and flowers.

Full of calm joy it was, as I of grief; Too full of joy and soft delicious warmth; So that I felt a movement in my heart To chide, and to reproach that solitude With songs of misery, music of our woes; And sat me down, and took a mouthed shell

And murmur'd into it, and made melody—

O melody no more! for while I sang, And with poor skill let pass into the breeze The dull shell's echo, from a bowery strand

Just opposite, an island of the sea, There came enchantment with the shifting wind,

That did both drown and keep alive my ears.

I threw my shell away upon the sand, And a wave fill'd it, as my sense was fill'd With that new blissful golden melody. A living death was in each gush of sounds,

Each family of rapturous hurried notes, That fell, one after one, yet all at once, Like pearl beads dropping sudden from their string:

And then another, then another strain, Each like a dove leaving its olive perch, With music wing'd instead of silent plumes,

To hover round my head, and make me sick

Of joy and grief at once. Grief overcame,

And I was stopping up my frantic ears, When, past all hindrance of my trembling hands,

A voice came sweeter, sweeter than all tune,

And still it cried, 'Apollo! young Apollo! The morning-bright Apollo! young Apollo!'

I fled, it follow'd me, and cried 'Apollo!' O Father, and O Brethren, had ye felt Those pains of mine; O Saturn, hadst thou felt,

Ye would not call this too indulgent tongue Presumptuous, in thus venturing to be heard."

So far her voice flow'd on, like timorous brook

That, lingering along a pebbled coast, Doth fear to meet the sea: but sea it met, And shudder'd; for the overwhelming voice

Of huge Enceladus swallow'd it in wrath: The ponderous syllables, like sullen waves In the half-glutted hollows of reef-rocks, Came booming thus, while still upon his arm

He lean'd; not rising, from supreme contempt.

"Or shall we listen to the over-wise, Or to the over-foolish giant, Gods?

Not thunderbolt on thunderbolt, till all That rebel Jove's whole armory were spent,

Not world on world upon these shoulders piled,

Could agonize me more than baby-words In midst of this dethronement horrible. Speak! roar! shout! yell! ye sleepy Titans all.

Do ye forget the blows, the buffets vile? Are ye not smitten by a youngling arm?

Dost thou forget, sham Monarch of the Waves,

Thy scalding in the seas? What, have  
 I rous'd  
 Your spleens with so few simple words as  
 these?  
 O joy! for now I see ye are not lost:  
 O joy! for now I see a thousand eyes  
 Wide glaring for revenge!" — As this he  
 said,  
 He lifted up his stature vast, and stood,  
 Still without intermission speaking thus!  
 "Now ye are flames, I'll tell you how to  
 burn,  
 And purge the ether of our enemies;  
 How to feed fierce the crooked stings of  
 fire,  
 And singe away the swollen clouds of  
 Jove,  
 Stifling that puny essence in its tent.  
 O let him feel the evil he hath done;  
 For though I scorn Oceanus's lore,  
 Much pain have I for more than loss of  
 realms:  
 The days of peace and slumberous calm  
 are fled;  
 Those days, all innocent of scathing war,  
 When all the fair Existences of heaven  
 Came open-eyed to guess what we would  
 speak: —  
 That was before our brows were taught  
 to frown,  
 Before our lips knew else but solemn  
 sounds;  
 That was before we knew the winged  
 thing,  
 Victory, might be lost, or might be won.  
 And be ye mindful that Hyperion,  
 Our brightest brother, still is undis-  
 graced —  
 Hyperion, lo! his radiance is here!"

All eyes were on Enceladus's face,  
 And they beheld, while still Hyperion's  
 name  
 Flew from his lips up to the vaulted rocks.  
 A pallid gleam across his features stern:  
 Not savage, for he saw full many a God  
 Wroth at himself. He look'd upon them  
 all,  
 And in each face he saw a gleam of light,  
 But splendor in Saturn's, whose hoar  
 locks  
 Shone like the bubbling foam about a keel  
 When the prow sweeps into a midnight  
 cove.  
 In pale and silver silence they remain'd,  
 Till suddenly a splendor, like the morn,

Pervaded all the beetling gloomy steeps,  
 All the sad spaces of oblivion,  
 And every gulf, and every chasm old,  
 And every height, and every sullen  
 depth,  
 Voiceless, or hoarse with loud tormented  
 streams:  
 And all the everlasting cataracts,  
 And all the headlong torrents far and  
 near,  
 Mantled before in darkness and huge  
 shade,  
 Now saw the light and made it terrible.  
 It was Hyperion — a granite peak  
 His bright feet touch'd, and there he  
 stay'd to view  
 The misery his brilliance had betray'd  
 To the most hateful seeing of itself.  
 Golden his hair of short Numidian curl,  
 Regal his shape majestic, a vast shade  
 In midst of his own brightness, like the  
 bulk  
 Of Memnon's image at the set of sun  
 To one who travels from the dusking  
 East:  
 Sighs, too, as mournful as that Memnon's  
 harp  
 He utter'd, while his hands contempla-  
 tive  
 He press'd together, and in silence stood.  
 Despondence seiz'd again the fallen Gods  
 At sight of the dejected King of Day,  
 And many hid their faces from the light:  
 But fierce Enceladus sent forth his eyes  
 Among the brotherhood; and, at their  
 glare,  
 Uprose Iäpetus, and Cretus too,  
 And Phorcus, sea-born, and together  
 strode  
 To where he towered on his eminence.  
 There those four shouted forth old  
 Saturn's name;  
 Hyperion from the peak loud answered,  
 "Saturn!"  
 Saturn sat near the Mother of the Gods,  
 In whose face was no joy, though all the  
 Gods  
 Gave from their hollow throats the name  
 of "Saturn!"

## BOOK III

Thus in alternate uproar and sad peace,  
 Amazed were those Titans utterly.  
 O leave them, Muse! O leave them to  
 their woes;

For thou art weak to sing such tumults  
dire :

A solitary sorrow best befits  
Thy lips, and antheming a lonely grief.  
Leave them, O Muse ! for thou anon wilt  
find

Many a fallen old Divinity  
Wandering in vain about bewildered  
shores.

Meantime touch piously the Delphic  
harp,

And not a wind of heaven but will breathe  
In aid soft warble from the Dorian flute ;  
For lo ! 'tis for the Father of all verse.

Flush every thing that hath a vermeil hue,  
Let the rose glow intense and warm the  
air,

And let the clouds of even and of morn  
Float in voluptuous fleeces o'er the hills ;  
Let the red wine within the goblet boil,  
Cold as a bubbling well ; let faint-lipp'd  
shells,

On sands, or in great deeps, vermilion  
turn

Through all their labyrinths ; and let the  
maid

Blush keenly, as with some warm kiss  
surpris'd.

Chief isle of the embowered Cyclades,  
Rejoice, O Delos, with thine olives green,  
And poplars, and lawn-shading palms,  
and beech,

In which the zephyr breathes the loudest  
song,

And hazels thick, dark-stemm'd beneath  
the shade :

Apollo is once more the golden theme !  
Where was he, when the Giant of the Sun  
Stood bright, amid the sorrow of his  
peers ?

Together had he left his mother fair  
And his twin-sister sleeping in their  
bower,

And in the morning twilight wandered  
forth

Beside the osiers of a rivulet,  
Full ankle-deep in lilies of the vale.

The nightingale had ceas'd, and a few  
stars

Were lingering in the heavens, while the  
thrush

Began calm-throated. Throughout all  
the isle

There was no covert, no retired cave  
Unhaunted by the murmurous noise of  
waves,

Though scarcely heard in many a green  
recess.

He listen'd, and he wept, and his bright  
tears

Went trickling down the golden bow he  
held.

Thus with half-shut suffused eyes he  
stood,

While from beneath some cumbrous  
boughs hard by

With solemn step an awful Goddess  
came,

And there was purport in her looks for  
him,

Which he with eager guess began to read  
Perplex'd, the while melodiously he said :  
"How cam'st thou over the unfooted  
sea ?

Or hath that antique mien and robed form  
Mov'd in these vales invisible till now ?  
Sure I have heard those vestments sweep-  
ing o'er

The fallen leaves, when I have sat alone  
In cool mid-forest. Surely I have traced  
The rustle of those ample skirts about  
These grassy solitudes, and seen the  
flowers

Lift up their heads, as still the whisper  
pass'd.

Goddess ! I have beheld those eyes be-  
fore,

And their eternal calm, and all that face,  
Or I have dream'd." — "Yes," said the  
supreme shape,

"Thou hast dream'd of me ; and awaking  
up

Didst find a lyre all golden by thy side,  
Whose strings touch'd by thy fingers, all  
the vast

Unwearied ear of the whole universe  
Listen'd in pain and pleasure at the birth  
Of such new tuneful wonder. Is't not  
strange

That thou shouldst weep, so gifted ?  
Tell me, youth,

What sorrow thou canst feel ; for I am  
sad

When thou dost shed a tear : explain thy  
griefs

To one who in this lonely isle hath been  
The watcher of thy sleep and hours of  
life,

From the young day when first thy infant  
hand

Pluck'd witless the weak flowers, till  
thine arm



Could bend that bow heroic to all times.  
Show thy heart's secret to an ancient  
Power

Who hath forsaken old and sacred thrones  
For prophecies of thee, and for the sake  
Of loveliness new born."—Apollo then,  
With sudden scrutiny and gloomless eyes,  
Thus answer'd, while his white melodious  
throat

Throbb'd with the syllables. — "Mne-  
mosyne!

Thy name is on my tongue, I know not  
how;

Why should I tell thee what thou so well  
seest?

Why should I strive to show what from  
thy lips

Would come no mystery? For me, dark,  
dark,

And painful vile oblivion seals my eyes:  
I strive to search wherefore I am so sad,  
Until a melancholy numbs my limbs;  
And then upon the grass I sit, and moan,  
Like one who once had wings. — O why  
should I

Feel curs'd and thwarted, when the liege-  
less air

Yields to my step aspirant? why should I  
Spurn the green turf as hateful to my  
feet?

Goddess benign, point forth some un-  
known thing:

Are there not other regions than this isle?  
What are the stars? There is the sun,  
the sun!

And the most patient brilliance of the  
moon!

And stars by thousands! Point me out  
the way

To any one particular beauteous star,  
And I will flit into it with my lyre,  
And make its silvery splendor pant with  
bliss.

I have heard the cloudy thunder: Where  
is power?

Whose hand, whose essence, what divinity  
Makes this alarum in the elements,  
While I here idle listen on the shore  
In fearless yet in aching ignorance?  
O tell me, lonely Goddess, by thy harp,  
That waileth every morn and eventide,  
Tell me why thus I rave, about these  
groves!

Mute thou remainest — Mute! yet I can  
read

A wondrous lesson in thy silent face:

Knowledge enormous makes a God of me.  
Names, deeds, gray legends, dire events,  
rebellions,

Majesties, sovran voices, agonies,  
Creations and destroyings, all at once  
Pour into the wide hollows of my brain,  
And deify me, as if some blithe wine  
Or bright elixir peerless I had drunk,  
And so become immortal." — Thus the  
God,

While his enkindled eyes, with level  
glance

Beneath his white soft temples, steadfast  
kept

Trembling with light upon Mnemosyne.  
Soon wild commotions shook him, and  
made flush

All the immortal fairness of his limbs;  
Most like the struggle at the gate of  
death;

Or liker still to one who should take  
leave

Of pale immortal death, and with a pang  
As hot as death's is chill, with fierce con-  
vulse

Die into life: so young Apollo anguish'd;  
His very hair, his golden tresses famed  
Kept undulation round his eager neck.

During the pain Mnemosyne upheld  
Her arms as one who prophesied. — At  
length

Apollo shriek'd; — and lo! from all his  
limbs

Celestial \* \* \* \* \*  
\* \* \*

*September, 1818 — September, 1819. 1820.*

## LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI

### BALLAD

O WHAT can ail thee, knight-at-arms,  
Alone and palely loitering!  
The sedge has wither'd from the lake,  
And no birds sing.

O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms!  
So haggard and so woe-begone?  
The squirrel's granary is full,  
And the harvest's done.

I see a lily on thy brow  
With anguish moist and fever dew,  
And on thy cheeks a fading rose  
Fast withereth too.



I met a lady in the meads,  
 Full beautiful — a faery's child,  
 Her hair was long, her foot was light,  
 And her eyes were wild.

I made a garland for her head,  
 And bracelets too, and fragrant zone;  
 She look'd at me as she did love,  
 And made sweet moan.

I set her on my pacing steed,  
 And nothing else saw all day long.  
 For sidelong would she bend, and sing  
 A faery's song.

She found me roots of relish sweet,  
 And honey wild, and manna dew,  
 And sure in language strange she said —  
 "I love thee true."

She took me to her elfin grot,  
 And there she wept, and sigh'd full sore,  
 And there I shut her wild wild eyes  
 With kisses four.

And there she lull'd me asleep,  
 And there I dream'd — Ah! woe  
 betide!  
 The latest dream I ever dream'd  
 On the cold hill's side.

I saw pale kings and princes too,  
 Pale warriors, death-pale were they all;  
 They cried — "La Belle Dame sans Merci  
 Hath thee in thrall!"

I saw their starv'd lips in the gloam,  
 With horrid warning gaped wide,  
 And I awoke and found me here,  
 On the cold hill's side.

And this is why I sojourn here,  
 Alone and palely loitering,  
 Though the sedge is wither'd from the  
 lake  
 And no birds sing.  
 1819. May 10, 1820.

## ON FAME

### I

FAME, like a wayward girl, will still be  
 coy  
 To those who woo her with too slavish  
 knees,

But makes surrender to some thought-  
 less boy,  
 And dotes the more upon a heart at ease;  
 She is a Gipsy, — will not speak to those  
 Who have not learnt to be content with-  
 out her;  
 A Jilt, whose ear was never whisper'd  
 close,  
 Who thinks they scandal her who talk  
 about her;  
 A very Gipsy is she, Nilus-born,  
 Sister-in-law to jealous Potiphar;  
 Ye love-sick Bards! repay her scorn for  
 scorn;  
 Ye Artists lovelorn! madmen that ye  
 are!  
 Make your best bow to her and bid adieu,  
 Then, if she likes it, she will follow you.

### II

How fever'd is the man, who cannot look  
 Upon his mortal days with temperate  
 blood,  
 Who vexes all the leaves of his life's book,  
 And robs his fair name of its maiden-  
 hood;  
 It is as if the rose should pluck herself,  
 Or the ripe plum finger its misty bloom,  
 As if a Naiad, like a meddling elf,  
 Should darken her pure grot with muddy  
 gloom:  
 But the rose leaves herself upon the briar,  
 For winds to kiss and grateful bees to feed,  
 And the ripe plum still wears its dim  
 attire,  
 The undisturbed lake has crystal space;  
 Why then should man, teasing the world  
 for grace,  
 Spoil his salvation for a fierce miscreed?  
 1819. 1848.

## TO SLEEP

O soft embalmer of the still midnight,  
 Shutting with careful fingers and benign,  
 Our gloom-pleased eyes, embowered from  
 the light,  
 Enshaded in forgetfulness divine:  
 O soothest Sleep! if so it please thee,  
 close,  
 In midst of this thine hymn, my willing  
 eyes,  
 Or wait the amen, ere thy poppy throws  
 Around my bed its lulling charities;

Then save me, or the passed day will  
shine

Upon my pillow, breeding many woes,—  
Save me from curious conscience, that  
still lords

Its strength for darkness, burrowing like  
a mole;

Turn the key deftly in the oiled wards,  
And seal the hushed casket of my soul.

1819. 1848.

BRIGHT STAR! WOULD I WERE  
STEADFAST AS THOU ART

BRIGHT star! would I were steadfast as  
thou art—

Not in lone splendor hung aloft the  
night,

And watching, with eternal lids apart,  
Like Nature's patient sleepless Eremite,  
The moving waters at their priestlike  
task

Of pure ablution round earth's human  
shores,

Or gazing on the new soft fallen mask  
Of snow upon the mountains and the  
moors—

No—yet still steadfast, still unchange-  
able,

Pillow'd upon my fair love's ripening  
breast,

To feel for ever its soft fall and swell,  
Awake for ever in a sweet unrest,

Still, still to hear her tender-taken  
breath,

And so live ever—or else swoon to death.  
*September, 1820. February, 1846.*

# LANDOR

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# LANDOR

## GEBIR

### BOOK I

THE INVASION. THE MEETING OF GEBIR  
AND CHAROBA. THE LOVES OF  
TAMAR AND THE SEA-NYMPH. THE  
SEA-SHELL. THE WRESTLING-MATCH

I SING the fates of Gebir. He had  
dwelt  
Among those mountain-caverns which  
retain  
His labors yet, vast halls and flowing  
wells,  
Nor have forgotten their old master's  
name  
Though sever'd from his people: here,  
incensed  
By meditating on primeval wrongs,  
He blew his battle-horn, at which uprose  
Whole nations; here, ten thousand of  
most might  
He call'd aloud; and soon Charoba saw  
His dark helm hover o'er the land of  
Nile.

What should the virgin do? should  
royal knees  
Bend suppliant? or defenceless hands  
engage  
Men of gigantic force, gigantic arms?  
For 'twas reported that nor sword suf-  
ficed,  
Nor shield immense nor coat of massive  
mail,  
But that upon their towering heads they  
bore  
Each a huge stone, refulgent as the stars.  
This told she Dalica, then cried aloud,  
"If on your bosom laying down my head  
I sobb'd away the sorrows of a child,  
If I have always, and Heav'n knows I  
have,  
Next to a mother's held a nurse's name,  
Succor this one distress, recall those days,

Love me, tho' 'twere because you lov'd  
me then."

But whether confident in magic rites  
Or touched with sexual pride to stand  
implor'd,  
Dalica smiled, then spake: "Away those  
fears,  
Though stronger than the strongest of his  
kind,

He falls; on me devolve that charge;  
he falls.

Rather than fly him, stoop thou to allure;  
Nay, journey to his tents. A city stood  
Upon that coast, they say, by Sidad  
built,

Whose father Gad built Gadir; on this  
ground

Perhaps he sees an ample room for war.  
Persuade him to restore the walls himself  
In honor of his ancestors, persuade . . .  
But wherefore this advice? young, un-  
espoused,

Charoba want persuasions! and a  
queen!"

"O Dalica!" the shuddering maid  
exclaim'd,

"Could I encounter that fierce frightful  
man?

Could I speak? no, nor sigh." "And  
canst thou reign?"

Cried Dalica; "Yield empire or comply."

Unfixed, though seeming fixed, her  
eyes downcast,

The wonted buzz and bustle of the court  
From far through sculptured galleries  
met her ear;

Then lifting up her head, the evening sun  
Pour'd a fresh splendor on her burnished  
throne:

The fair Charoba, the young queen, com-  
plied.

But Gebir, when he heard of her ap-  
proach,

Laid by his orb'd shield; his vizor-helm,  
His buckler and his corslet he laid by.



And bade that none attend him: at his  
 side  
 Two faithful dogs that urge the silent  
 course,  
 Shaggy, deep-chested, crouched; the  
 crocodile,  
 Crying, oft made them raise their flaccid  
 ears  
 And push their heads within their mas-  
 ter's hand.  
 There was a brightening paleness in his  
 face,  
 Such as Diana rising o'er the rocks  
 Shower'd on the lonely Latmian; on his  
 brow  
 Sorrow there was, yet nought was there  
 severe.  
 But when the royal damsel first he saw,  
 Faint, hanging on her handmaids, and  
 her knees  
 Tottering, as from the motion of the car,  
 His eyes looked earnest on her, and those  
 eyes  
 Show'd, if they had not, that they might  
 have, lov'd,  
 For there was pity in them at that hour.  
 With gentle speech, and more with gentle  
 looks,  
 He sooth'd her; but lest Pity go beyond  
 And crost Ambition lose her lofty aim  
 Bending, he kissed her garment, and  
 retired.  
 He went, nor slumber'd in the sultry  
 noon,  
 When viands, couches, generous wines,  
 persuade,  
 And slumber most refreshes; nor at night,  
 When heavy dews are laden with disease;  
 And blindness waits not there for linger-  
 ing age.  
 Ere morning dawn'd behind him; he  
 arrived  
 At those rich meadows where young  
 Tamar fed  
 The royal flocks entrusted to his care.  
 "Now," said he to himself, "will I repose  
 At least this burthen on a brother's  
 breast."  
 His brother stood before him: he,  
 amazed,  
 Rear'd suddenly his head, and thus began.  
 "Is it thou, brother! Tamar, is it thou!  
 Why, standing on the valley's utmost  
 verge,  
 Lookest thou on that dull and dreary  
 shore

Where beyond sight Nile blackens all the  
 sand?  
 And why that sadness? When I past our  
 sheep  
 The dew-drops were not shaken off the  
 bar,  
 Therefore if one be wanting, 'tis untold."  
 "Yes, one is wanting, nor is that un-  
 told,"  
 Said Tamar; "and this dull and dreary  
 shore  
 Is neither dull nor dreary at all hours."  
 Whereon the tear stole silent down his  
 cheek,  
 Silent, but not by Gebir unobserv'd:  
 Wondering he gazed awhile, and pitying  
 spake.  
 "Let me approach thee; does the morn-  
 ing light  
 Scatter this wan suffusion o'er thy brow,  
 This faint blue lustre under both thine  
 eyes?"  
 "O brother, is this pity or reproach?"  
 Cried Tamar, "cruel if it be reproach,  
 If pity, O how vain!" "Whate'er it be  
 That grieves thee, I will pity, thou but  
 speak,  
 And I can tell thee, Tamar, pang for  
 pang."  
 "Gebir! then more than brothers are  
 we now!  
 Everything (take my hand) will I confess.  
 I neither feed the flock nor watch the  
 fold;  
 How can I, lost in love? But, Gebir, why  
 That anger which has risen to your cheek?  
 Can other men? could you? what, no  
 reply!  
 And still more anger, and still worse  
 conceal'd!  
 Are these your promises? your pity  
 this?"  
 "Tamar, I well may pity what I feel —  
 Mark me aright — I feel for thee — pro-  
 ceed —  
 Relate me all." "Then will I all relate,"  
 Said the young shepherd, gladden'd from  
 his heart.  
 "'Twas evening, though not sunset, and  
 the tide  
 Level with these green meadows, seem'd  
 yet higher:  
 'Twas pleasant; and I loosen'd from my  
 neck  
 The pipe you gave me, and began to play.  
 O that I ne'er had learnt the tuneful art!

It always brings us enemies or love.  
 Well, I was playing, when above the waves  
 Some swimmer's head methought I saw ascend;  
 I, sitting still, survey'd it, with my pipe  
 Awkwardly held before my lips half-closed,  
 Gebir! it was a Nymph! a Nymph divine!  
 I cannot wait describing how she came,  
 How I was sitting, how she first assum'd  
 The sailor; of what happen'd there remains  
 Enough to say, and too much to forget.  
 The sweet deceiver stepped upon this bank  
 Before I was aware; for with surprise  
 Moments fly rapid as with love itself.  
 Stooping to tune afresh the hoarsen'd reed,  
 I heard a rustling, and where that arose  
 My glance first lighted on her nimble feet.  
 Her feet resembled those long shells explored  
 By him who to befriend his steed's dim sight  
 Would blow the pungent powder in the eye.  
 Her eyes too! O immortal Gods! her eyes  
 Resembled — what could they resemble? what  
 Ever resemble those? Even her attire  
 Was not of wonted woof nor vulgar art:  
 Her mantle show'd the yellow samphire-pod,  
 Her girdle the dove-color'd wave serene.  
 'Shepherd,' said she, 'and will you wrestle now,  
 And with the sailor's hardier race engage?'  
 I was rejoiced to hear it, and contrived  
 How to keep up contention: could I fail  
 By pressing not too strongly, yet to press?  
 'Whether a shepherd, as indeed you seem,  
 Or whether of the hardier race you boast,  
 I am not daunted; no; I will engage.'  
 'But first,' said she, 'what wager will you lay?'  
 'A sheep,' I answered: 'add whatever you will.'  
 'I can not,' she replied, 'make that return:  
 Our hidid vessels in their pitchy round  
 Seldom, unless from rapine, hold a sheep,

But I have sinuous shells of pearly hue  
 Within, and they that lustre have imbibed  
 In the sun's palace-porch, where when unyoked  
 His chariot-wheel stands midway in the wave:  
 Shake one and it awakens, then apply  
 Its polish'd lips to your attentive ear,  
 And it remembers its august abodes,  
 And murmurs as the ocean murmurs there.  
 And I have others given me by the nymphs,  
 Of sweeter sound than any pipe you have;  
 But we, by Neptune! for no pipe contend,  
 This time a sheep I win, a pipe the next.'  
 Now came she forward eager to engage,  
 But first her dress, her bosom then survey'd,  
 And heav'd it, doubting if she could deceive.  
 Her bosom seem'd, inclos'd in haze like heav'n,  
 To baffle touch, and rose forth undefined:  
 Above her knee she drew the robe succinct,  
 Above her breast, and just below her arms.  
 'This will preserve my breath when tightly bound,  
 If struggle and equal strength should so constrain.'  
 Thus, pulling hard to fasten it, she spake,  
 And, rushing at me, closed: I thrill'd throughout  
 And seem'd to lessen and shrink up with cold.  
 Again with violent impulse gushed my blood,  
 And hearing nought external, thus absorb'd,  
 I heard it, rushing through each turbid vein,  
 Shake my unsteady swimming sight in air.  
 Yet with unyielding though uncertain arms  
 I clung around her neck; the vest beneath  
 Rustled against our slippery limbs entwined:  
 Often mine springing with eluded force

Started aside and trembled till replaced :  
And when I most succeeded, as I thought,  
My bosom and my throat felt so com-  
pressed

That life was almost quivering on my lips,  
Yet nothing was there painful : these  
are signs

Of secret arts and not of human might ;  
What arts I cannot tell ; I only know  
My eyes grew dizzy and my strength  
decay'd ;

I was indeed o'ercome . . . with what  
regret,

And more, with what confusion, when  
I reached

The fold, and yielding up the sheep, she  
cried,

'This pays a shepherd to a conquering  
maid.'

She smiled, and more of pleasure than  
disdain

Was in her dimpled chin and liberal lip,  
And eyes that languished, lengthening,  
just like love.

She went away ; I on the wicker gate  
Leant, and could follow with my eyes  
alone.

The sheep she carried easy as a cloak ;  
But when I heard its bleating, as I did,  
And saw, she hastening on, its hinder feet  
Struggle, and from her snowy shoulder  
slip,

One shoulder its poor efforts had unveil'd,  
Then all my passions mingling fell in tears ;  
Restless then ran I to the highest ground  
To watch her ; she was gone ; gone down  
the tide ;

And the long moonbeam on the hard wet  
sand

Lay like a jasper column half up-rear'd."

"But, Tamar! tell me, will she not  
return?"

"She will return, yet not before the  
moon

Again is at the full: she promised this,  
Tho' when she promised I could not  
reply."

"By all the Gods I pity thee! go on,  
Fear not my anger, look not on my shame,  
For when a lover only hears of love  
He finds his folly out, and is ashamed.

Away with watchful nights and lonely  
days,

Contempt of earth and aspect up to  
heaven,

With contemplation, with humility,

A tatter'd cloak that pride wears when  
deform'd,

Away with all that hides me from myself,  
Parts me from others, whispers I am wise :  
From our own wisdom less is to be reapt  
Than from the barest folly of our friend.  
Tamar! thy pastures, large and rich,

afford  
Flowers to thy bees and herbage to thy  
sheep,

But, battered on too much, the poorest  
croft

Of thy poor neighbor yields what thine  
denies."

They hasten'd to the camp, and Gebir  
there

Resolved his native country to forego,  
And order'd from those ruins to the right  
They forthwith raise a city. Tamar  
heard

With wonder, tho' in passing 'twas half-  
told,

His brother's love, and sigh'd upon his  
own. 1798.<sup>1</sup>

## ROSE AYLMER<sup>2</sup>

Ah what avails the sceptred race,

Ah what the form divine !

What every virtue, every grace !

Rose Aylmer, all were thine.

Rose Aylmer, whom these wakeful eyes

May weep, but never see,

A night of memories and of sighs

I consecrate to thee. 1806.

<sup>1</sup> The exact dates of *writing*, for nearly all of Landon's poems, are unknown ; and the same is true for Browning, and, on the whole, for all of the following poets. From this point on, therefore, the poems of each author will be arranged chronologically according to the dates of *publication*, and the dates of writing (if known) will be given only when especially important.

<sup>2</sup> Rose Aylmer, the daughter of Henry, fourth Baron Aylmer, was Landon's companion in his walks about Swansea ("Abertawy") in Wales. She went to India, and died there in 1800. Landon speaks of her again in two poems written late in life: "The Three Roses," 1858 (see page 439); and "Abertawy," 1850, the concluding lines of which almost equal in beauty this early lyric, usually considered the most beautiful of his poems:

Where is she now? Call'd far away,  
By one she dared not disobey,  
To those proud halls, for youth unfit,  
Where princes stand and judges sit.  
Where Ganges rolls his widest wave  
She dropped her blossom in the grave;  
Her noble name she never changed,  
Nor was her nobler heart estranged.

REGENERATION<sup>1</sup>

WE are what suns and winds and waters  
 make us;  
 The mountains are our sponsors, and  
 the rills  
 Fashion and win their nursling with their  
 smiles.  
 But where the land is dim from tyranny,  
 There tiny pleasures occupy the place  
 Of glories and of duties; as the feet  
 Of fabled fairies when the sun goes down  
 Trip o'er the grass where wrestlers strove  
 by day.  
 Then Justice, call'd the Eternal One  
 above,  
 Is more inconstant than the buoyant form  
 That burst into existence from the froth  
 Of ever-varying ocean; what is best  
 Then becomes worst; what loveliest,  
 most deformed.  
 The heart is hardest in the softest climes,  
 The passions flourish, the affections die.  
 O thou vast tablet of these awful truths,  
 That fillest all the space between the seas,  
 Spreading from Venice's deserted courts  
 To the Tarentine and Hydruntine mole,  
 What lifts thee up? what shakes thee?  
 'tis the breath  
 Of God. Awake, ye nations! spring to  
 life!  
 Let the last work of his right hand appear  
 Fresh with his image, Man. Thou rec-  
 reant slave  
 That sittest afar off and helpest not,  
 O thou degenerate Albion!<sup>2</sup> with what  
 shame  
 Do I survey thee, pushing forth the  
 sponge  
 At thy spear's length, in mockery at the  
 thirst  
 Of holy Freedom in his agony,  
 And prompt and keen to pierce the  
 wounded side!  
 Must Italy then wholly rot away  
 Amid her slime, before she germinate  
 Into fresh vigor, into form again?  
 What thunder bursts upon mine ear!  
 some isle

Hath surely risen from the gulfs pro-  
 found,  
 Eager to suck the sunshine from the  
 breast  
 Of beauteous Nature, and to catch the  
 gale  
 From golden Hermus and Melena's brow.  
 A greater thing than isle, than continent,  
 Than earth itself, than ocean circling  
 earth,  
 Hath risen there; regenerate Man hath  
 risen.  
 Generous old bard of Chios! not that  
 Jove  
 Deprived thee in thy latter days of sight  
 Would I complain, but that no higher  
 theme  
 Than a disdainful youth, a lawless king,  
 A pestilence, a pyre, awoke thy song,  
 When on the Chian coast, one javelin's  
 throw  
 From where thy tombstone, where thy  
 cradle, stood,  
 Twice twenty self-devoted Greeks as-  
 sail'd  
 The naval host of Asia, at one blow<sup>1</sup>  
 Scattered it into air . . . and Greece was  
 free . . .  
 And ere these glories beam'd, thy day had  
 closed.  
 Let all that Elis ever saw, give way,  
 All that Olympian Jove e'er smiled upon:  
 The Marathonian columns never told  
 A tale more glorious, never Salamis,  
 Nor, faithful in the centre of the false,  
 Platea, nor Anthela, from whose mount  
 Benignant Ceres wards the blessed Laws,  
 And sees the Amphictyon dip his weary  
 foot  
 In the warm streamlet of the strait below.  
 Goddess! altho' thy brow was never  
 rear'd  
 Among the powers that guarded or as-  
 sail'd  
 Perfidious Ilion, parricidal Thebes,  
 Or other walls whose war-belt e'er in-  
 closed  
 Man's congregated crimes and vengeful  
 pain,  
 Yet hast thou touched the extremes of  
 grief and joy;  
 Grief upon Enna's mead and Hell's ascent,  
 A solitary mother; joy beyond,

<sup>1</sup> Inspired by the struggle of the Greek people for independence.

<sup>2</sup> What those amongst us who are affected by a sense of national honor most lament, is, that England, whose generosity would cost her nothing and whose courage would be unexposed to fatality, stands aloof. (*Landor*, in the *Dedication of Imaginary Conversations*, 1820.)

<sup>1</sup> Alluding to the victory of Canaris over the Turkish fleet. Compare the poem of Victor Hugo on the same battle, in *Les Orientales*.

Far beyond, that thy woe, in this thy  
fane:  
The tears were human, but the bliss  
divine.  
I, in the land of strangers, and depressed  
With sad and certain presage for my own,  
Exult at hope's fresh dayspring, tho' afar,  
There where my youth was not unexercised  
By chiefs in willing war and faithful song:  
Shades as they were, they were not  
empty shades,  
Whose bodies haunt our world and blear  
our sun,  
Obstruction worse than swamp and  
shapeless sands.  
Peace, praise, eternal gladness, to the  
souls  
That, rising from the seas into the  
heavens,  
Have ransom'd first their country with  
their blood!  
O thou immortal Spartan! at whose  
name  
The marble table sounds beneath my  
palms,  
Leonidas! even thou wilt not disdain  
To mingle names august as these with  
thine;  
Nor thou, twin-star of glory, thou whose  
rays  
Stream'd over Corinth on the double sea,  
Achaian and Saronic; whom the sons  
Of Syracuse, when Death removed thy  
light,  
Wept more than slavery ever made them  
weep,  
But shed (if gratitude is sweet) sweet  
tears.  
The hand that then pour'd ashes o'er  
their heads  
Was loosen'd from its desperate chain  
by thee.  
What now can press mankind into one  
mass,  
For Tyranny to tread the more secure?  
From gold alone is drawn the guilty wire  
That Adulation trills: she mocks the tone  
Of Duty, Courage, Virtue, Piety,  
And under her sits Hope. O how unlike  
That graceful form in azure vest array'd,  
With brow serene, and eyes on heaven  
alone  
In patience fixed, in fondness unobscured!  
What monsters coil beneath the spreading  
tree

Of Despotism! what wastes extend  
around!  
What poison floats upon the distant  
breeze!  
But who are those that cull and deal its  
fruit?  
Creatures that shun the light and fear  
the shade,  
Bloated and fierce, Sleep's mien and  
Famine's cry.  
Rise up again, rise in thy dignity,  
Dejected Man! and scare this brood  
away. 1824.

#### CHILD OF A DAY, THOU KNOWEST NOT

CHILD of a day, thou knowest not  
The tears that overflow thine urn,  
The gushing eyes that read thy lot,  
Nor, if thou knewest, couldst return!  
And why the wish! the pure and blessed  
Watch like thy mother o'er thy sleep.  
O peaceful night! O envied rest!  
Thou wilt not ever see her weep. 1831.

#### LYRICS, TO IANTHE

AWAY my verse; and never fear,  
As men before such beauty do;  
On you she will not look severe,  
She will not turn her eyes from you.  
Some happier graces could I lend  
That in her memory you should live,  
Some little blemishes might blend,  
For it would please her to forgive.  
  
WHEN Helen first saw wrinkles in her  
face  
('Twas when some fifty long had settled  
there  
And intermarried and branched off  
awide)  
She threw herself upon her couch and  
wept:  
On this side hung her head, and over that  
Listlessly she let fall the faithless brass  
That made the men as faithless.  
But when you  
Found them, or fancied them, and would  
not hear  
That they were only vestiges of smiles,  
Or the impression of some amorous hair



Astray from cloistered curls and roseate  
band,  
Which had been lying there all night  
perhaps  
Upon a skin so soft, "No, no," you said,  
"Sure, they are coming, yes, are come,  
are here :  
Well, and what matters it, while thou art  
too !"

IANTHE ! you are call'd to cross the sea !  
A path forbidden *me* !  
Remember, while the Sun his blessing  
sheds  
Upon the mountain-heads,  
How often we have watched him laying  
down  
His brow, and dropped our own  
Against each other's, and how faint and  
short  
And sliding the support !  
What will succeed it now ? Mine is  
unblessed,  
Ianthe ! nor will rest  
But on the very thought that swells with  
pain.  
O bid me hope again !  
O give me back what Earth, what (with-  
out you)  
Not Heaven itself can do,  
One of the golden days that we have  
past ;  
And let it be my last !  
Or else the gift would be, however sweet,  
Fragile and incomplete.

I HELD her hand, the pledge of bliss,  
Her hand that trembled and withdrew ;  
She bent her head before my kiss . . .  
My heart was sure that hers was true.

Now I have told her I must part,  
She shakes my hand, she bids adieu,  
Nor shuns the kiss. Alas, my heart !  
Hers never was the heart for you.

PLEASURE ! why thus desert the heart  
In its spring-tide ?  
I could have seen her, I could part,  
And but have sigh'd !

O'er every youthful charm to stray,  
To gaze, to touch . . .  
Pleasure ! why take so much away,  
Or give so much !

MILD is the parting year, and sweet  
The odor of the falling spray ;  
Life passes on more rudely fleet,  
And balmless is its closing day.

I wait its close, I court its gloom,  
But morn that never must there fall  
Or on my breast or on my tomb  
The tear that would have sooth'd it all.

PAST ruin'd Iliou Helen lives,  
Alcestis rises from the shades ;  
Verse calls them forth ; 'tis verse that  
gives  
Immortal youth to mortal maids.

Soon shall Oblivion's deepening veil  
Hide all the peopled hills you see,  
The gay, the proud, while lovers hail  
These many summers you and me.  
1831.

#### FIESOLAN IDYL

HERE, where precipitate Spring, with one  
light bound  
Into hot Summer's lusty arms, expires,  
And where go forth at morn, at eve, at  
night,  
Soft airs that want the lute to play with  
'em,  
And softer sighs that know not what  
they want,  
Aside a wall, beneath an orange-tree,  
Whose tallest flowers could tell the lowlier  
ones  
Of sights in Fiesolè right up above,  
While I was gazing a few paces off  
At what they seem'd to show me with  
their nods,  
Their frequent whispers and their point-  
ing shoots,  
A gentle maid came down the garden-  
steps  
And gathered the pure treasure in her  
lap.  
I heard the branches rustle, and stepped  
forth  
To drive the ox away, or mule or goat,  
Such I believed it must be. How could I  
Let beast o'erpower them ? When hath  
wind or rain  
Borne hard upon weak plant that wanted  
me,  
And I (however they might bluster round)

Walked off? 'Twere most ungrateful:  
     for sweet scents  
 Are the swift vehicles of still sweeter  
     thoughts,  
 And nurse and pillow the dull memory  
 That would let drop without them her  
     best stores.  
 They bring me tales of youth and tones  
     of love.  
 And 'tis and ever was my wish and way  
 To let all flowers live freely, and all die  
 (Whene'er their Genius bids their souls  
     depart)

Among their kindred in their native place.  
 I never pluck the rose; the violet's head  
 Hath shaken with my breath upon its bank  
 And not reproached me: the ever-sacred  
     cup

Of the pure lily hath between my hands  
 Felt safe, unsoil'd, nor lost one grain of  
     gold.

I saw the light that made the glossy  
     leaves

More glossy; the fair arm, the fairer cheek  
 Warmed by the eye intent on its pursuit;  
 I saw the foot that, altho' half-erect  
 From its gray slipper, could not lift her  
     up

To what she wanted: I held down a  
     branch

And gather'd her some blossoms; since  
     their hour

Was come, and bees had wounded them,  
     and flies

Of harder wing were working their way  
     thro'

And scattering them in fragments under-  
     foot.

So crisp were some, they rattled un-  
     evolved,

Others, ere broken off, fell into shells,  
 For such appear the petals when de-  
     tached

Unbending, brittle, lucid, white like snow,  
 And like snow not seen thro', by eye or  
     sun:

Yet every one her gown received from me  
 Was fairer than the first. I thought not  
     so,

But so she praised them to reward my  
     care.

I said, "You find the largest."

"This indeed,"

Cried she, "is large and sweet." She  
     held one forth,

Whether for me to look at or to take

She knew not, nor did I; but taking it  
 Would best have solved (and this she felt)  
     her doubt.

I dared not touch it; for it seemed a part  
 Of her own self; fresh, full, the most  
     mature

Of blossoms, yet a blossom; with a touch  
 To fall, and yet unfallen. She drew back  
 The boon she tender'd, and then, finding  
     not

The ribbon at her waist to fix it in,  
 Dropped it, as loth to drop it, on the rest.

1831.

#### FOR AN EPITAPH AT FIESOLE

Lo! where the four mimosas blend their  
     shade

In calm repose at last is Landor laid,  
 For ere he slept he saw them planted  
     here

By her his soul had ever held most dear,  
 And he had lived enough when he had  
     dried her tear. 1831.

#### UPON A SWEET-BRIAR <sup>1</sup>

My briar that smelledst sweet  
 When gentle spring's first heat

Ran through thy quiet veins, —  
 Thou that wouldst injure none,  
 But wouldst be left alone,

Alone thou leavest me, and nought of  
     thine remains.

What! hath no poet's lyre  
 O'er thee, sweet-breathing briar,  
     Hung fondly, ill or well?

And yet methinks with thee  
 A poet's sympathy,

Whether in weal or woe, in life or death,  
     might dwell.

Hard usage both must bear,  
 Few hands your youth will rear,  
     Few bosoms cherish you;

Your tender prime must bleed  
 Ere you are sweet, but freed

From life, you then are prized; thus  
     prized are poets too.

<sup>1</sup>This and the following poem from the *Citation of William Shakespeare*.

And art thou yet alive?  
And shall the happy hive  
Send out her youth to cull  
Thy sweets of leaf and flower,  
And spend the sunny hour  
With thee, and thy faint heart with  
murmuring music lull?

Tell me what tender care,  
Tell me what pious prayer,  
Bade thee arise and live.  
The fondest-favored bee  
Shall whisper nought to thee  
More loving than the song my grateful  
muse shall give.

1834.

## THE MAID'S LAMENT

I LOVED him not; and yet now he is  
gone  
I feel I am alone.

I check'd him while he spoke; yet could  
he speak,

Alas! I would not check.

For reasons not to love him once I sought,  
And wearied all my thought

To vex myself and him: I now would  
give

My love, could he but live  
Who lately lived for me, and when he  
found

'Twas vain, in holy ground  
He hid his face amid the shades of death.

I waste for him my breath  
Who wasted his for me: but mine re-  
turns,

And this lorn bosom burns  
With stifling heat, heaving it up in sleep,  
And waking me to weep  
Tears that had melted his soft heart: for  
years

Wept he as bitter tears.  
*Merciful God!* such was his latest prayer,  
*These may she never share.*

Quieter is his breath, his breast more  
cold,

Than daisies in the mould,  
Where children spell, athwart the church-  
yard gate,

His name and life's brief date.  
Pray for him, gentle souls, whoe'er you  
be,

And oh! pray too for me.

1834.

THE SHADES OF AGAMEMNON  
AND IPHIGENEIA <sup>1</sup>

*Iphigeneia.* Father! I now may lean  
upon your breast,  
And you with unreverted eyes will grasp  
Iphigeneia's hand.

We are not shades  
Surely! for yours throb yet.

And did my blood  
Win Troy for Greece?

Ah! 'twas ill done, to shrink;  
But the sword gleam'd so sharp; and the  
good priest

Trembled, and Pallas frown'd above,  
severe.

*Agamemnon.* Daughter!

*Iphigeneia.* Beloved father! is the  
blade

Again to pierce my bosom? 'tis unfit  
For sacrifice; no blood is in its veins,  
No God requires it here: here are no  
wrongs

To vindicate, no realms to overthrow.  
You standing as at Aulis in the fane,  
With face averted, holding (as before)  
My hand; but yours burns not, as then  
it burn'd.

This alone shows me we are with the  
Blessed,

Nor subject to the sufferings we have  
borne.

I will win back past kindness.

Tell me then,  
Tell how my mother fares who loved me  
so,

And griev'd, as 'twere for you, to see me  
part.

Frown not, but pardon me for tarrying  
Amid too idle words, nor asking how  
She prais'd us both (which most?) for  
what we did.

*Agamemnon.* Ye Gods who govern  
here! do human pangs

Reach the pure soul thus far below? do  
tears

Spring in these meadows?

*Iphigeneia.* No, sweet father, no . . .  
I could have answered that; why ask  
the Gods?

<sup>1</sup> "I imagine Agamemnon to descend from his horrible death, and to meet instantly his daughter. By the nature of things, by the suddenness of the event, Iphigeneia can have heard nothing of her mother's double crime, adultery and murder." (Aspasia to Cleone, introducing the poem as first given in *Pericles and Aspasia*, 1836.)

*Agamemnon.* Iphigeneia! O my child! the Earth  
Has gendered crimes unheard of heretofore,  
And Nature may have changed in her last depths,  
Together with the Gods and all their laws.

*Iphigeneia.* Father! we must not let you here condemn;  
Not, were the day less joyful: recollect  
We have no wicked here; no king to judge.  
Poseidon, we have heard, with bitter rage  
Lashes his foaming steeds against the skies,  
And, laughing with loud yell at winged fire,  
Innoxious to his fields and palaces  
Affrights the eagle from the sceptred hand;  
While Pluto, gentlest brother of the three  
And happiest in obedience, views sedate  
His tranquil realm, nor envies theirs above.  
No change have we, not even day for night  
Nor spring for summer.

All things are serene,  
Serene too be your spirit! None on earth  
Ever was half so kindly in his house,  
And so compliant, even to a child.  
Never was snatch'd your robe away from me,  
Though going to the council. The blind man  
Knew his good king was leading him indoors,  
Before he heard the voice that marshal'd Greece.  
Therefore all prais'd you.

Proudest men themselves  
In others praise humility, and most  
Admire it in the sceptre and the sword.  
What then can make you speak thus rapidly  
And briefly? in your step thus hesitate?  
Are you afraid to meet among the good  
Incestuous Helen here?

*Agamemnon.* O! gods of hell!  
*Iphigeneia.* She hath not past the river.

We may walk  
With our hands link'd nor feel our house's shame.

*Agamemnon.* Never mayst thou, Iphigeneia, feel it!  
Aulis had no sharp sword, thou wouldst exclaim,

Greece no avenger — I, her chief so late,  
'Through Erebos, through Elysium, writhe beneath it.

*Iphigeneia.* Come, I have better diadems than those  
Of Argos and Mycenai — come away,  
And I will weave them for you on the bank.

You will not look so pale when you have walk'd

A little in the grove, and have told all  
Those sweet fond words the widow sent her child.

*Agamemnon.* O Earth! I suffered less upon thy shores!

(*Aside.*) The bath that bubbled with my blood, the blows

That spilt it (O worse torture!) must she know?

Ah! the first woman coming from Mycenai

Will pine to pour this poison in her ear,  
Taunting sad Charon for his slow advance.

Iphigeneia!

*Iphigeneia.* Why thus turned away?  
Calling me with such fondness! I am here,

Father! and where you are, will ever be.

*Agamemnon.* Thou art my child; yes, yes, thou art my child.

All was not once what all now is! Come on,

Idol of love and truth! my child! my child!

(*Alone.*) Fell woman! ever false! false was thy last

Denunciation, as thy bridal vow;  
And yet even that found faith with me!

The dirk  
Which sever'd flesh from flesh, where this hand rests,

Severs not, as thou boastedst in thy scoffs,  
Iphigeneia's love from Agamemnon:

The wife's a spark may light, a straw consume,

The daughter's not her heart's whole  
fount hath quench'd,

'Tis worthy of the Gods, and lives for ever.

*Iphigeneia.* What spake my father to the Gods above?

Unworthy am I then to join in prayer?  
If, on the last, or any day before,  
Of my brief course on earth, I did amiss,  
Say it at once, and let me be unblessed;  
But, O my faultless father! why should  
you?

And shun so my embraces?

Am I wild  
And wandering in my fondness?  
We are shades!  
Groan not thus deeply; blight not thus  
the season

Of full-orb'd gladness! Shades we are  
indeed,  
But mingled, let us feel it, with the  
blessed.

I knew it, but forgot it suddenly,  
Altho' I felt it all at your approach.  
Look on me; smile with me at my illu-  
sion.

You are so like what you have ever been  
(Except in sorrow!) I might well forget  
I could not win you as I used to do.  
It was the first embrace since my descent  
I ever aim'd at: those who love me live,  
Save one, who loves me most, and now  
would chide me.

*Agamemnon.* We want not, O Iphi-  
gencia, we  
Want not embrace, nor kiss that cools  
the heart

With purity, nor words that more and  
more

Teach what we know, from those we  
know, and sink

Often most deeply where they fall most  
light.

Time was when for the faintest breath  
of thine

Kingdom and life were little,  
*Iphigeneia.* Value them

As little now.  
*Agamemnon.* Were life and kingdom  
all!

*Iphigeneia.* Ah! by our death many  
are sad who loved us.

The little fond Electra, and Orestes  
So childish and so bold! O that mad  
boy!

They will be happy too.  
Cheer! king of men!

Cheer! there are voices, songs — Cheer!  
arms advance.

*Agamemnon.* Come to me, soul of  
peace! These, these alone,

These are not false embraces.

*Iphigeneia.* Both are happy!  
*Agamemnon.* Freshness breathes round  
me from some breeze above.  
What are ye, winged ones! with golden  
urns?

*The Hours*

(*Descending.*) To each an urn we bring:  
Earth's purest gold  
Alone can hold

The lymph of the Lethean spring.  
We, son of Atreus! we divide  
The dulcet from the bitter tide  
That runs athwart the paths of  
men.

No more our pinions shalt thou see.  
Take comfort! We have done with  
thee,  
And must away to earth again.

(*Ascending.*) Where thou art, thou  
Of braided brow,  
Thou cull'd too soon from Argive bowers,  
Where thy sweet voice is heard among  
The shades that thrill with choral songs,  
None can regret the parted Hours.

(*As the Hours depart, the shades of the Argive warriors  
who had fought at Troy approach and chant in chorus  
the praises of Agamemnon and his daughter.*)

*Chorus of Argives*

Maiden! be thou the spirit that breathes  
Triumph and joy into our song!

Wear and bestow these amaranth-  
wreaths,

Iphigeneia — they belong  
To none but thee and her who reigns

(Less chanted) on our bosky plains.

*Semi-chorus*

Iphigeneia! 'tis to thee  
Glory we owe and victory.

Clash, men of Argos, clash your  
arms,

To martial worth and virgin charms.

*Other Semi-chorus*

Ye men of Argos! it was sweet  
To roll the fruits of conquest at the feet

Whose whispering sound made bravest  
hearts beat fast.

This we have known at home;  
But hither we are come

To crown the king who ruled us first and  
last.



*Chorus*

Father of Argos! king of men!  
 We chant the hymn of praise to thee.  
 In serried ranks we stand again,  
 Our glory safe, our country free.  
 Clash, clash the arms we bravely  
 bore  
 Against Scamander's God-defended  
 shore.

*Semi-chorus*

Blessed art thou who hast repell'd  
 Battle's wild fury, Ocean's whelming  
 foam;  
 Blessed o'er all, to have beheld  
 Wife, children, house avenged, and peace-  
 ful home!

*Other Semi-chorus*

We, too, thou seest, are now  
 Among the happy, though the  
 aged brow  
 From sorrow for us we could not  
 protect,  
 Nor, on the polished granite of the  
 well  
 Folding our arms, of spoils and  
 perils tell,  
 Nor lift the vase on the lov'd head  
 erect.

*Semi-chorus*

What whirling wheels are those  
 behind?  
 What plumes come flaring through  
 the wind,  
 Nearer and nearer? From his  
 car  
 He who defied the heaven-born  
 Powers of war  
 Pelides springs! Dust, dust are we  
 To him, O king, who bends the knee,  
 Proud only to be first in reverent praise  
 of thee.

*Other Semi-chorus*

Clash, clash the arms! None other race  
 Shall see such heroes face to face.  
 We too have fought; and they have seen  
 Nor sea-sand gray nor meadow green  
 Where Dardans stood against their men.  
 Clash! Io Paean! clash again!  
 Repinings for lost days repress.  
 The flames of Troy had cheer'd us less.

*Chorus*

Hark! from afar more war-steeds neigh,  
 Thousands o'er thousands rush this way.  
 Ajax is yonder! ay, behold  
 The radiant arms of Lycian gold!  
 Arms from admiring valor won,  
 Tydeus! and worthy of thy son.  
 'Tis Ajax wears them now; for he  
 Rules over Adria's stormy sea.

He threw them to the friend who lost  
 (By the dim judgment of the host)  
 Those wet with tears which Thetis gave  
 The youth most beauteous of the brave.  
 In vain! the insatiate soul would go  
 For comfort to his peers below.  
 Clash! ere we leave them all the plain,  
 Clash! Io Paean! once again.<sup>1</sup> 1836.

THE DEATH OF ARTEMIDORA<sup>2</sup>

"ARTEMIDORA! Gods invisible,  
 While thou art lying faint along the  
 couch,  
 Have tied the sandal to thy slender feet  
 And stand beside thee, ready to convey  
 Thy weary steps where other rivers flow.  
 Refreshing shades will waft thy weariness  
 Away, and voices like thy own come near  
 And nearer, and solicit an embrace."  
 Artemidora sigh'd, and would have  
 pressed  
 The hand now pressing hers, but was too  
 weak.  
 Iris stood over her dark hair unseen  
 While thus Elpenor spake. He looked  
 into  
 Eyes that had given light and life ere-  
 while  
 To those above them, but now dim with  
 tears  
 And wakefulness. Again he spake of joy  
 Eternal. At that word, that sad word,  
 joy,  
 Faithful and fond her bosom heav'd once  
 more:  
 Her head fell back; and now a loud deep  
 sob  
 Swell'd thro' the darken'd chamber;  
 'twas not hers. 1836.

<sup>1</sup> See Lander's own comment on this poem, p. 422.

<sup>2</sup> 1836, in *Pericles and Aspasia*. Slightly altered and included in the *Hellenics*, 1846, etc., from which the present text is taken. See Colvin's comment on the poem, in his *Life of Lander*, pp. 193-4.

CORINNA TO TANAGRA, FROM  
ATHENS

TANAGRA! think not I forget  
 Thy beautifully storied streets;  
 Be sure my memory bathes yet  
 In clear Thermodon, and yet greets  
 The blithe and liberal shepherd-boy,  
 Whose sunny bosom swells with joy  
 When we accept his matted rushes  
 Upheav'd with sylvan fruit; away he  
 bounds, and blushes.

A gift I promise: one I see  
 Which thou with transport wilt receive,  
 The only proper gift for thee,  
 Of which no mortal shall bereave  
 In later times thy mouldering walls,  
 Until the last old turret falls;  
 A crown, a crown from Athens won,  
 A crown no God can wear, beside Latona's son.

There may be cities who refuse  
 To their own child the honors due,  
 And look ungently on the Muse;  
 But ever shall those cities rue  
 The dry, unyielding, niggard breast,  
 Offering no nourishment, no rest,  
 To that young head which soon shall rise  
 Disdainfully, in might and glory, to the  
 skies.

Sweetly where cavern'd Dirce flows  
 Do white-arm'd maidens chant my  
 lay,  
 Flapping the while with laurel-rose  
 The honey-gathering tribes away;  
 And sweetly, sweetly Attic tongues  
 Lisp your Corinna's early songs;  
 To her with feet more graceful come  
 The verses that have dwelt in kindred  
 breasts at home.

O let thy children lean aslant  
 Against the tender mother's knee,  
 And gaze into her face, and want  
 To know what magic there can be  
 In words that urge some eyes to dance,  
 While others as in holy trance  
 Look up to heaven: be such my praise!  
 Why linger? I must haste, or lose the  
 Delphic bays. 1836.

## SAPPHO TO HESPERUS

I HAVE beheld thee in the morning hour  
 A solitary star, with thankless eyes,  
 Ungrateful as I am! who bade thee rise  
 When sleep all night had wandered from  
 my bower.

Can it be true that thou art he  
 Who shines now above the sea  
 Amid a thousand, but more bright?  
 Ah yes! the very same art thou  
 That heard me then and hearest now . . .  
 Thou seemest, star of love! to throb with  
 light. 1836.

## LITTLE AGLAE

TO HER FATHER, ON HER STATUE BEING  
 CALLED LIKE HER

FATHER! the little girl we see  
 Is not, I fancy, so like me;  
 You never hold her on your knee.

When she came home, the other day,  
 You kiss'd her; but I cannot say  
 She kiss'd you first and ran away.  
 1836.

## DIRCE

STAND close around, ye Stygian set,  
 With Dirce in one boat conveyed,  
 Or Charon, seeing, may forget  
 That he is old, and she a shade.  
 1836.

## CLEONE TO ASPASIA

WE mind not how the sun in the midsky  
 Is hastening on; but when the golden orb  
 Strikes the extreme of earth, and when  
 the gulfs  
 Of air and ocean open to receive him,  
 Dampness and gloom invade us; then  
 we think  
 Ah! thus is it with Youth. Too fast his  
 feet  
 Run on for sight; hour follows hour;  
 fair maid  
 Succeeds fair maid; bright eyes bestar  
 his couch;  
 The cheerful horn awakens him; the  
 feast,



## TO JOSEPH ABLETT

LORD of the Celtic dells,  
Where Clwyd listens as his minstrel tells  
Of Arthur, or Pendragon, or perchance  
The plumes of flashy France,  
Or, in dark region far across the main,  
Far as Grenada in the world of Spain,

Warriors untold to Saxon ear,  
Until their steel-clad spirits reappear;  
How happy were the hours that held  
Thy friend (long absent from his native  
home)  
Amid thy scenes with thee! how wide  
afield  
From all past cares and all to come!

What hath Ambition's feverish grasp,  
what hath  
Inconstant Fortune, panting Hope;  
What Genius, that should cope  
With the heart-whispers in that path  
Winding so idly, where the idler stream  
Flings at the white-haired poplars gleam  
for gleam?

Ablett! of all the days  
My sixty summers ever knew,  
Pleasant as there have been no few,  
Memory not one surveys  
Like those we spent together. Wisely  
spent  
Are they alone that leave the soul con-  
tent.

Together we have visited the men  
Whom Pictish pirates vainly would  
have drowned;  
Ah, shall we ever clasp the hand again  
That gave the British harp its truest  
sound?  
Live, Grasmere's guest! and thou by  
Grasmere's springs!  
Serene creators of immortal things.<sup>1</sup>

And live too thou for happier days  
Whom Dryden's force and Spenser's fays  
Have heart and soul possess'd:<sup>2</sup>  
Growl in Grim London he who will,  
Revisit thou Maiano's hill,  
And swell with pride his sunburnt  
breast.

<sup>1</sup> Southey and Wordsworth.    <sup>2</sup> Leigh Hunt.

Old Redi in his easy-chair  
With varied chant awaits thee there,  
And here are voices in the grove  
Aside my house, that make me think  
Bacchus is coming down to drink  
To Ariadne's love.

But whither am I borne away  
From thee, to whom began my lay?  
Courage! I am not yet quite lost;  
I stepped aside to greet my friends;  
Believe me, soon the greeting ends,  
I know but three or four at most.

Deem not that Time hath borne too  
hard  
Upon the fortunes of thy bard,  
Leaving me only three or four:  
'Tis my old number; dost thou start  
At such a tale? in what man's heart  
Is there fireside for more?

I never courted friends or Fame;  
She pouted at me long, at last she came,  
And threw her arms around my neck and  
said,  
"Take what hath been for years delay'd,  
And fear not that the leaves will fall  
One hour the earlier from thy coronal."

Ablett! thou knowest with what even  
hand  
I waved away the offer'd seat  
Among the clambering, clattering, stilted  
great,  
The rulers of our land;  
Nor crowds nor kings can lift me up,  
Nor sweeten Pleasure's purer cup.

Thou knowest how, and why, are dear to  
me  
My citron groves of Fiesole,  
My chirping Affrico, my beechwood  
nook,  
My Naiads, with feet only in the brook,  
Which runs away and giggles in their  
faces,  
Yet there they sit, nor sigh for other  
places.

'Tis not Pelasgian wall,  
By him made sacred whom alone  
'Twere not profane to call  
The bard divine, nor (thrown  
Far under me) Valdarno, nor the crest  
Of Vallombrosa in the crimson east.

Here can I sit or roam at will :  
 Few trouble me, few wish me ill,  
 Few come across me, few too near ;  
 Here all my wishes make their stand ;  
 Here ask I no one's voice or hand ;  
 Scornful of favor, ignorant of fear.

Yon vine upon the maple bough  
 Flouts at the hearty wheat below ;  
 Away her venal wines the wise man  
 sends,

While those of lower stem he brings  
 From inmost treasure vault, and sings  
 Their worth and age among his chosen  
 friends.

Behold our Earth, most nigh the sun  
 Her zone least opens to the genial heat,  
 But farther off her veins more freely  
 run :

'Tis thus with those who whirl about the  
 great ;  
 The nearest shrink and shiver, we re-  
 mote

May open-breasted blow the pastoral oat.  
 1834. 1837.<sup>1</sup>

#### TO MARY LAMB

COMFORT thee, O thou mourner, yet  
 awhile !

Again shall Elia's smile  
 Refresh thy heart, where heart can ache  
 no more.

What is it we deplore ?

He leaves behind him, freed from griefs  
 and years,

Far worthier things than tears.  
 The love of friends without a single foe :  
 Unequalled lot below !

His gentle soul, his genius, these are  
 thine ;

For these dost thou repine ?  
 He may have left the lowly walks of men ;  
 Left them he has ; what then ?

Are not his footsteps followed by the  
 eyes  
 Of all the good and wise ?

<sup>1</sup> This poem had been printed in an earlier form, containing lines to Coleridge, in Leigh Hunt's *London Journal*, December 3, 1834. See Colvin's *Life of Landor*, note to p. 142.

Tho' the warm day is over, yet they seek  
 Upon the lofty peak

Of his pure mind the roseate light that  
 glows

O'er death's perennial snows.  
 Behold him! from the region of the  
 blessed

He speaks : he bids thee rest.

1834. 1837.

#### ON HIS OWN IPHIGENEIA AND AGAMEMNON

FROM eve to morn, from morn to parting  
 night

Father and daughter stood within my  
 sight.

I felt the looks they gave, the words they  
 said,

And reconducted each serener shade.

Ever shall these to me be well-spent  
 days,

Sweet fell the tears upon them, sweet the  
 praise.

Far from the footstool of the tragic  
 throne,

I am tragedian in that scene alone.

1837.

#### FAREWELL TO ITALY

I LEAVE thee,auteous Italy ! no more  
 From the high terraces, at eventide,  
 To look supine into thy depths of sky,  
 Thy golden moon between the cliff and  
 me,

Or thy dark spires of fretted cypresses  
 Bordering the channel of the milky-way.  
 Fiesole and Valdarno must be dreams  
 Hereafter, and my own lost Affrico  
 Murmur to me but in the poet's song.

I did believe (what have I not believed?)  
 Weary with age, but unoppressed by  
 pain,

To close in thy soft clime my quiet day  
 And rest my bones in the Mimosa's  
 shade.

Hope! Hope! few ever cherished thee  
 so little ;

Few are the heads thou hast so rarely  
 raised ;

But thou didst promise this, and all was  
 well.



1835. 1846.

## 1846.

## 1846.

## 1846.

## LYRICS

"Do you remember me? or are you proud?"

Lightly advancing thro' her star-trimm'd crowd,

Ianthe said, and looked into my eyes.

"A yes, a yes, to both: for Memory

Where you but once have been must ever be,

And at your voice Pride from his throne must rise."

No, my own love of other years!

No, it must never be.

Much rests with you that yet endears,

Alas! but what with me?

Could those bright years o'er me revolve

So gay, o'er you so fair,

The pearl of life we would dissolve

And each the cup might share.

You show that truth can ne'er decay,

Whatever fate befalls;

I, that the myrtle and the bay

Shoot fresh on ruin'd walls.

ONE year ago my path was green,

My footstep light, my brow serene;

Alas! and could it have been so

One year ago?

There is a love that is to last

When the hot days of youth are past:

Such love did a sweet maid bestow

One year ago.

I took a leaflet from her braid

And gave it to another maid.

Love! broken should have been thy bow.

One year ago.

YES; I write verses now and then,

But blunt and flaccid is my pen,

No longer talked of by young men

As rather clever:

In the last quarter are my eyes,

You see it by their form and size;

Is it not time then to be wise?

Or now or never.

Fairest that ever sprang from Eve!

While Time allows the short reprieve,

Just look at me! would you believe

'Twas once a lover?

I cannot clear the five-bar gate,  
But, trying first its timbers' state,  
Climb stiffly up, take breath, and wait  
To trundle over.

Thro' gallopade I cannot swing  
The entangling blooms of Beauty's  
spring:

I cannot say the tender thing,  
Be't true or false,  
And am beginning to opine  
Those girls are only half-divine  
Whose waists yon wicked boys entwine  
In giddy waltz.

I fear that arm above that shoulder,  
I wish them wiser, graver, older,  
Sedater, and no harm if colder  
And panting less.

Ah! people were not half so wild  
In former days, when, starchly mild,  
Upon her high-heel'd Essex smiled  
The brave Queen Bess.

WITH rosy hand a little girl pressed down  
A boss of fresh-cull'd cowslips in a rill:

Often as they sprang up again, a frown

Show'd she disliked resistance to her will:

But when they droop'd their heads and  
shone much less,

She shook them to and fro, and threw  
them by,

And tripped away. "Ye loathe the  
heaviness

Ye love to cause, my little girls!"  
thought I,

"And what had shone for you, by you  
must die."

YOU smiled, you spoke, and I believed,

By every word and smile deceived.

Another man would hope no more;

Nor hope I what I hoped before:

But let not this last wish be vain;

Deceive, deceive me once again!

REMAIN, ah not in youth alone,

Tho' youth, where you are, long will  
stay,

But when my summer days are gone,

And my autumnal haste away.

"Can I be always by your side?"

No; but the hours you can, you must,

Nor rise at Death's approaching stride,

Nor go when dust is gone to dust.

SOON, O Ianthe! life is o'er,  
 And sooner beauty's heavenly smile:  
 Grant only (and I ask no more),  
 Let love remain that little while.

---

TO A CYCLAMEN

I COME to visit thee again,  
 My little flowerless cyclamen;  
 To touch the hand, almost to press,  
 That cheered thee in thy loneliness.  
 What could thy careful guardian find  
 Of thee in form, of me in mind,  
 What is there in us rich or rare,  
 To make us claim a moment's care?  
 Unworthy to be so caressed,  
 We are but withering leaves at best.

---

GIVE me the eyes that look on mine,  
 And, when they see them dimly shine,  
 Are moister than they were.  
 Give me the eyes that fain would find  
 Some relics of a youthful mind  
 Amid the wrecks of care.  
 Give me the eyes that catch at last  
 A few faint glimpses of the past,  
 And, like the arkite dove,  
 Bring back a long-lost olive-bough,  
 And can discover even now  
 A heart that once could love.

---

TWENTY years hence my eyes may grow  
 If not quite dim, yet rather so,  
 Still yours from others they shall know  
 Twenty years hence

Twenty years hence tho' it may hap  
 That I be call'd to take a nap  
 In a cool cell where thunder-clap  
 Was never heard,

There breathe but o'er my arch of grass  
 A not too sadly sigh'd *Alas*,  
 And I shall catch, ere you can pass,  
 That winged word.

---

PROUD word you never spoke, but you  
 will speak  
 Four not exempt from pride some  
 future day.  
 Resting on one white hand a warm wet  
 cheek  
 Over my open volume you will say,  
 "This man loved *me!*" then rise and  
 trip away.

ALAS, how soon the hours are over  
 Counted us out to play the lover!  
 And how much narrower is the stage  
 Allotted us to play the sage!  
 But when we play the fool, how wide,  
 The theatre expands! beside,  
 How long the audience sits before us!  
 How many prompters! what a chorus!  
 1846.

QUATRAINS

ON the smooth brow and clustering hair  
 Myrtle and rose! your wreath com-  
 bine,  
 The duller olive I would wear,  
 Its constancy, its peace, be mine.

---

My hopes retire; my wishes as before  
 Struggle to find their resting-place in  
 vain;  
 The ebbing sea thus beats against the  
 shore;  
 The shore repels it; it returns again.

---

VARIOUS the roads of life; in one  
 All terminate, one lonely way.  
 We go; and "Is he gone?"  
 Is all our best friends say.

---

Is it not better at an early hour  
 In its calm cell to rest the weary head,  
 While birds are singing and while blooms  
 the bower,  
 Than sit the fire out and go starv'd to  
 bed? 1846.

I KNOW NOT WHETHER I AM  
 PROUD

I KNOW not whether I am proud,  
 But this I know, I hate the crowd:  
 Therefore pray let me disengage  
 My verses from the motley page,  
 Where others far more sure to please  
 Pour out their choral song with ease.

And yet perhaps, if some should tire  
 With too much froth or too much fire,  
 There is an ear that may incline  
 Even to words so dull as mine.

1846.

THE DAY RETURNS, MY NATAL  
DAY

THE day returns, my natal day,  
Borne on the storm and pale with snow,  
And seems to ask me why I stay,  
Stricken by Time and bowed by Woe.

Many were once the friends who came  
To wish me joy; and there are some  
Who wish it now; but not the same;  
They are whence friend can never  
come.

Nor are they you my love watched o'er  
Cradled in innocence and sleep;  
You smile into my eyes no more,  
Nor see the bitter tears they weep.  
1846.

## HOW MANY VOICES GAILY SING

How many voices gaily sing,  
"O happy morn, O happy spring  
Of life!" Meanwhile there comes o'er me  
A softer voice from Memory,  
And says, "If loves and hopes have flown  
With years, think too what griefs are  
gone!" 1846.

## TO ROBERT BROWNING

THERE is delight in singing, tho' none hear  
Beside the singer; and there is delight  
In praising, tho' the praiser sit alone  
And see the prais'd far off him, far above.  
Shakespeare is not our poet, but the  
world's,

Therefore on him no speech! and brief  
for thee.

Browning! Since Chaucer was alive  
and hale,

No man hath walked along our roads  
with step

So active, so inquiring eye, or tongue  
So varied in discourse. But warmer  
climes

Give brighter plumage, stronger wing:  
the breeze

Of Alpine heights thou playest with,  
borne on

Beyond Sorrento and Amalfi, where  
The Siren waits thee, singing song for  
song. 1846.

ON THE HELLENICS<sup>1</sup>

COME back, ye wandering Muses, come  
back home,

Ye seem to have forgotten where it lies:  
Come, let us walk upon the silent sands  
Of Simois, where deep footmarks show  
long strides;

Thence we may mount, perhaps, to higher  
ground,

Where Aphroditè from Athenè won  
The golden apple, and from Herè too,  
And happy Ares shouted far below.

Or would ye rather choose the grassy  
vale

Where flows Anapos thro' anemones,  
Hyacinths, and narcissuses, that bend  
To show their rival beauty in the stream?

Bring with you each her lyre, and each  
in turn

Temper a graver with a lighter song.

1847.

## THRASYMEDES AND EUNOE

Who will away to Athens with me? who  
Loves choral songs and maidens crown'd  
with flowers,

Unenvious? mount the pinnacle; hoist  
the sail.

I promise ye, as many as are here,  
Ye shall not, while ye tarry with me,  
taste

From unrinsed barrel the diluted wine  
Of a low vineyard or a plant ill-pruned,  
But such as anciently the Ægean isles  
Pour'd in libation at their solemn feasts:  
And the same goblets shall ye grasp,  
embossed

With no vile figures of loose languid boors,  
But such as gods have lived with and  
have led.

The sea smiles bright before us. What  
white sail

Plays yonder? What pursues it? Like  
two hawks

<sup>1</sup> Prefixed to the second edition of Landor's *Hellenics*, 1847. It is here given slightly out of the exact chronological order, that it may stand as an introduction to the chief poems from the *Hellenics*, those of 1846 as well as those of 1847.

Other poems of Landor's, such as "The Death of Artemidora," "Cleone to Aspasia," "The Shades of Agamemnon" and "Iphigeneia," etc., though originally published in other collections, and therefore not given here with the *Hellenics*, were ultimately included by Landor among them.

Away they fly. Let us away in time  
To overtake them. Are they menaces  
We hear? And shall the strong repulse  
the weak,

Enraged at her defender? Hippias!  
Art thou the man? 'Twas Hippias. He  
had found

His sister borne from the Cecropian port  
By Thrasymedes. And reluctantly?

Ask, ask the maiden; I have no reply.

"Brother! O brother Hippias! O, if  
love,

If pity, ever touch'd thy breast, forbear!  
Strike not the brave, the gentle, the be-  
loved,

My Thrasymedes, with his cloak alone  
Protecting his own head and mine from  
harm."

"Didst thou not once before," cried  
Hippias,

Regardless of his sister, hoarse with  
wrath

At Thrasymedes, "didst not thou, dog-  
eyed,

Dare, as she walk'd up to the Parthenon,  
On the most holy of all holy days,  
In sight of all the city, dare to kiss  
Her maiden cheek?"

"Ay, before all the gods,  
Ay, before Pallas, before Artemis,  
Ay, before Aphroditè, before Herè,  
I dared; and dare again. Arise, my  
spouse!

Arise! and let my lips quaff purity  
From thy fair open brow."

The sword was up,  
And yet he kiss'd her twice. Some God  
withheld

The arm of Hippias; his proud blood  
seeth'd slower

And smote his breast less angrily; he  
laid

His hand on the white shoulder, and  
spake thus:

"Ye must return with me. A second  
time

Offended, will our sire Peisistratos  
Pardon the affront? Thou shouldst  
have ask'd thyself

This question ere the sail first flapp'd the  
mast."

"Already thou hast taken life from me;  
Put up thy sword," said the sad youth,  
his eyes

Sparkling; but whether love or rage or  
grief

They sparkled with, the Gods alone could  
see.

Piræus they re-entered, and their ship  
Drove up the little waves against the quay,  
Whence was thrown out a rope from one  
above,

And Hippias caught it. From the vir-  
gin's waist

Her lover dropped his arm, and blushed  
to think

He had retain'd it there in sight of rude  
Irreverent men: he led her forth, nor  
spake.

Hippias walked silent too, until they  
reached

The mansion of Peisistratos her sire.

Serenely in his sternness did the prince  
Look on them both awhile: they saw not  
him,

For both had cast their eyes upon the  
ground.

"Are these the pirates thou hast taken,  
son?"

Said he. "Worse, father! worse than  
pirates they,

Who thus abuse thy patience, thus abuse  
Thy pardon, thus abuse the holy rites  
Twice over."

"Well hast thou performed thy duty,"  
Firmly and gravely said Peisistratos.

"Nothing then, rash young man! could  
turn thy heart

From Eunoe, my daughter?"

"Nothing, sir,  
Shall ever turn it. I can die but once  
And love but once. O Eunoe! farewell!"  
"Nay, she shall see what thou canst bear  
for her."

"O father! shut me in my chamber,  
shut me

In my poor mother's tomb, dead or alive,  
But never let me see what he can bear;  
I know how much that is, when borne  
for me."

"Not yet: come on. And lag not thou  
behind,

Pirate of virgin and of princely hearts!  
Before the people and before the Goddess  
Thou hadst evinced the madness of thy  
passion,

And now wouldst bear from home and  
plenteousness

To poverty and exile this my child."

Then shuddered Thrasymedes, and ex-  
claim'd,

"I see my crime; I saw it not before.



The daughter of Peisistratos was born  
 Neither for exile nor for poverty,  
 Ah! nor for me!" He would have wept,  
     but one  
 Might see him, and weep worse. The  
     prince unmoved  
 Strode on, and said, "To-morrow shall  
     the people,  
 All who beheld thy trespasses, behold  
 The justice of Peisistratos, the love  
 He bears his daughter, and the reverence  
 In which he holds the highest law of  
     God."  
 He spake; and on the morrow they  
     were one. 1846.

### IPHIGENEIA AND AGAMEMNON

IPHIGENEIA, when she heard her doom  
 At Aulis, and when all beside the King  
 Had gone away, took his right hand, and  
     said,  
 "O father! I am young and very happy.  
 I do not think the pious Calchas heard  
 Distinctly what the Goddess spake.  
     Old-age  
 Obscures the senses. If my nurse, who  
     knew  
 My voice so well, sometimes misunder-  
     stood  
 While I was resting on her knee both  
     arms  
 And hitting it to make her mind my  
     words,  
 And looking in her face, and she in mine,  
 Might he not also hear one word amiss,  
 Spoken from so far off, even from Olym-  
     pus?"  
 The father placed his cheek upon her  
     head,  
 And tears dropped down it, but the king  
     of men  
 Replied not. Then the maiden spake  
     once more.  
 "O father! sayst thou nothing? Hear'st  
     thou not  
 Me, whom thou ever hast, until this hour,  
 Listened to fondly, and awakened me  
 To hear my voice amid the voice of birds,  
 When it was inarticulate as theirs,  
 And the down deadened it within the  
     nest?"  
 He moved her gently from him, silent still,  
 And this, and this alone, brought tears  
     from her,

Although she saw fate nearer: then with  
     sighs,  
 "I thought to have laid down my hair  
     before  
 Benignant Artemis, and not have dimmed  
 Her polished altar with my virgin blood;  
 I thought to have selected the white  
     flowers  
 To please the Nymphs, and to have asked  
     of each  
 By name, and with no sorrowful regret,  
 Whether, since both my parents willed  
     the change,  
 I might at Hymen's feet bend my clipped  
     brow;  
 And (after those who mind us girls the  
     most,)  
 Adore our own Athena, that she would  
 Regard me mildly with her azure eyes,  
 But father! to see you no more, and see  
 Your love, O father! go ere I am gone."  
 Gently he moved her off, and drew her  
     back,  
 Bending his lofty head far over hers,  
 And with dark depths of nature heaved  
     and burst.  
 He turn'd away; not far, but silent still.  
 She now first shuddered; for in him, so  
     nigh,  
 So long a silence seemed the approach of  
     death,  
 And like it. Once again she raised her  
     voice.  
 "O father! if the ships are now detained,  
 And all your vows move not the Gods  
     above,  
 When the knife strikes me there will be  
     one prayer  
 The less to them: and purer can there be  
 Any, or more fervent than the daughter's  
     prayer  
 For her dear father's safety and suc-  
     cess?"  
 A groan that shook him shook not his  
     resolve.  
 An aged man now entered, and without  
 One word, stepped slowly on, and took  
     the wrist  
 Of the pale maiden. She looked up and  
     saw  
 The fillet of the priest and calm cold  
     eyes.  
 Then turned she where her parent stood,  
     and cried  
 "O father! grieve no more: the ships  
     can sail." 1846.

THE HAMADRYAD<sup>1</sup>

RHAICOS was born amid the hills where-  
from

Gnidos the light of Caria is discern'd,  
And small are the white-crested that play  
near,

And smaller onward are the purple waves.  
Thence festal choirs were visible, all  
crown'd

With rose and myrtle if they were inborn;  
If from Pandion sprang they, on the coast  
Where stern Athenè raised her citadel,  
Then olive was intertwined with violets  
Cluster'd in bosses, regular and large.  
For various men wore various coronals;  
But one was their devotion; 'twas to  
her

Whose laws all follow, her whose smile  
withdraws

The sword from Ares, thunderbolt from  
Zeus,

And whom in his chill caves the mutable  
Of mind, Poseidon, the sea-king, re-  
veres,

And whom his brother, stubborn Dis,  
hath pray'd

To turn in pity the averted cheek  
Of her he bore away, with promises,  
Nay, with loud oath before dread Styx  
itself,

To give her daily more and sweeter  
flowers

Than he made drop from her on Enna's  
dell.

Rhaicos was looking from his father's  
door

At the long trains that hastened to the  
town

From all the valleys, like bright rivulets  
Gurgling with gladness, wave outrunning  
wave.

And thought it hard he might not also  
go

And offer up one prayer, and press one  
hand,

He knew not whose. The father call'd  
him in,

And said, "Son Rhaicos! those are idle  
games;

Long enough I have lived to find them  
so."

And ere he ended sighed; as old men do  
Always, to think how idle such games are.

"I have not yet," thought Rhaicos in  
his heart,  
And wanted proof.

"Suppose thou go and help  
Echeion at the hill, to bark yon oak  
And lop its branches off, before we delve  
About the trunk and ply the root with  
axe:

This we may do in winter."

Rhaicos went;  
For thence he could see farther, and see  
more

Of those who hurried to the city-gate.  
Echeion he found there with naked arm  
Swart-hair'd, strong-sinew'd, and his eyes  
intent

Upon the place where first the axe should  
fall:

He held it upright. "There are bees  
about,

Or wasps, or hornets," said the cautious  
eld,

"Look sharp, O son of Thallinos!" The  
youth

Inclined his ear, afar, and warily,  
And cavern'd in his hand. He heard a  
buzz

At first, and then the sound grew soft  
and clear,

And then divided into what seem'd tune,  
And there were words upon it, plaintive  
words.

He turn'd, and said, "Echeion! do not  
strike

That tree: it must be hollow; for some  
god

Speaks from within. Come thyself  
near." Again

Both turn'd toward it: and behold! there  
sat

Upon the moss below, with her two  
palms

Pressing it, on each side, a maid in form.  
Downcast were her long eyelashes, and  
pale

Her cheek, but never mountain-ash dis-  
play'd

Berries of color like her lip so pure,  
Nor were the anemones about her hair  
Soft, smooth and wavering like the face  
beneath.

"What dost thou here?" Echeion,  
half-afraid,

Half-angry cried. She lifted up her eyes,  
But nothing spake she. Rhaicos drew  
one step

<sup>1</sup> Compare Lowell's poem, "Rhoecus," which gives  
a somewhat different version of the same story.

Backward, for fear came likewise over  
him,  
But not such fear: he panted, gasp'd,  
drew in  
His breath, and would have turn'd it  
into words,  
But could not into one.

"O send away  
That sad old man!" said she. The old  
man went  
Without a warning from his master's  
son,  
Glad to escape, for sorely he now fear'd,  
And the axe shone behind him in their  
eyes.

*Hamad.* And wouldst thou too shed  
the most innocent  
Of blood? No vow demands it; no god  
wills  
The oak to bleed.

*Rhaicos.* Who art thou? whence?  
why here?  
And whither wouldst thou go? Among  
the robed

In white or saffron, or the hue that most  
Resembles dawn or the clear sky, is none  
Array'd as thou art. What so beautiful  
As that gray robe which clings about thee  
close,

Like moss to stones adhering, leaves to  
trees,

Yet lets thy bosom rise and fall in turn,  
As, touch'd by zephyrs, fall and rise the  
boughs

Of graceful platan by the river-side?

*Hamad.* Lovest thou well thy father's  
house?

*Rhaicos.* Indeed  
I love it, well I love it, yet would leave  
For thine, where'er it be, my father's  
house,  
With all the marks upon the door, that  
show

My growth at every birthday since the  
third,

And all the charms, o'erpowering evil  
eyes,

My mother nail'd for me against my bed,  
And the Cydonian bow (which thou shalt  
see)

Won in my race last spring from Euty-  
chos.

*Hamad.* Bethink thee what it is to  
leave a home  
Thou never yet has left, one night, one  
day.

*Rhaicos.* No, 'tis not hard to leave  
it; 'tis not hard

To leave, O maiden, that paternal home,  
If there be one on earth whom we may  
love

First, last, for ever; one who says that  
she

Will love for ever too. To say which  
word,

Only to say it, surely is enough . . .

It shows such kindness . . . if 'twere  
possible

We at the moment think she would in-  
deed.

*Hamad.* Who taught thee all this folly  
at thy age?

*Rhaicos.* I have seen lovers and have  
learned to love.

*Hamad.* But wilt thou spare the  
tree?

*Rhaicos.* My father wants  
The bark; the tree may hold its place  
awhile.

*Hamad.* Awhile! thy father numbers  
then my days?

*Rhaicos.* Are there no others where  
the moss beneath

Is quite as tufty? Who would send  
thee forth

Or ask thee why thou tarriest? Is thy  
flock

Anywhere near?

*Hamad.* I have no flock: I kill  
Nothing that breathes, that stirs, that  
feels the air,

The sun, the dew. Why should the  
beautiful

(And thou art beautiful) disturb the  
source

Whence springs all beauty? Hast thou  
never heard

Of Hamadryads?

*Rhaicos.* Heard of them I have:  
Tell me some tale about them. May I  
sit

Beside thy feet? Art thou not tired?  
The herbs

Are very soft; I will not come too nigh;  
Do but sit there, nor tremble so, nor  
doubt.

Stay, stay an instant: let me first ex-  
plore

If any acorn of last year be left  
Within it; thy thin robe too ill protects  
Thy dainty limbs against the harm one  
small

Acorn may do. Here's none. Another day

Trust me; till then let me sit opposite.

*Hamad.* I seat me; be thou seated, and content.

*Rhaicos.* O sight for gods! ye men below! adore

The Aphroditè. *Is* she there below?

Or sits she here before me? as she sate  
Before the shepherd on those heights  
that shade

The Hellespont, and brought his kindred  
woe.

*Hamad.* Reverence the higher Powers;  
nor deem amiss

Of her who pleads to thee, and would  
repay —

Ask not how much — but very much.  
Rise not;

No, *Rhaicos*, no! Without the nuptial  
vow

Love is unholy. Swear to me that none  
Of mortal maids shall ever taste thy kiss,  
Then take thou mine; then take it, not  
before.

*Rhaicos.* Harken, all gods above!  
O Aphroditè!

O Herè! Let my vow be ratified!

But wilt thou come into my father's  
house?

*Hamad.* Nay; and of mine I cannot  
give thee part.

*Rhaicos.* Where is it?

*Hamad.* In this oak.

*Rhaicos.* Ay; now begins  
The tale of *Hamadryad*; tell it through.

*Hamad.* Pray of thy father never to  
cut down

My tree; and promise him, as well thou  
mayst,

That every year he shall receive from me  
More honey than will buy him nine fat  
sheep,

More wax than he will burn to all the gods.  
Why faltest thou upon thy face? Some  
thorn

May scratch it, rash young man! Rise  
up; for shame!

*Rhaicos.* For a shame I can not rise.  
O pity me!

I dare not sue for love . . . but do not  
hate!

Let me once more behold thee . . . not  
once more,

But many days: let me love on . . . un-  
loved!

I aimed too high: on my head the bolt  
Falls back, and pierces to the very brain.

*Hamad.* Go . . . rather go, than make  
me say I love.

*Rhaicos.* If happiness is immortality,  
(And whence enjoy it else the gods  
above?)

I am immortal too: my vow is heard:  
Hark! on the left . . . Nay, turn not from  
me now,

I claim my kiss.

*Hamad.* Do men take first, then  
claim?

Do thus the seasons run their course with  
them?

— Her lips were seal'd, her head sank on  
his breast.

'Tis said that laughs were heard within  
the wood:

But who should hear them? . . . and  
whose laughs? and why?

Savory was the smell, and long past  
noon,

*Thallinos!* in thy house: for marjoram,  
Basil and mint, and thyme and rosemary,  
Were sprinkled on the kid's well roasted  
length,

Awaiting *Rhaicos*. Home he came at  
last

Not hungry, but pretending hunger keen,  
With head and eyes just o'er the maple  
plate.

"Thou seest but badly, coming from the  
sun,

Boy *Rhaicos!*" said the father. "That  
oak's bark

Must have been tough, with little sap  
between;

It ought to run; but it and I are old."

*Rhaicos*, although each morsel of the  
bread

Increased by chewing, and the meat grew  
cold

And tasteless to his palate, took a draught  
Of gold-bright wine, which, thirsty as he  
was,

He thought not of until his father fill'd  
The cup, averring water was amiss,  
But wine had been at all times pour'd on  
kid,

It was religion.

He thus fortified

Said, not quite boldly, and not quite  
abashed,

"Father, that oak is Zeus's own; that oak

Year after year will bring thee wealth  
from wax

And honey. There is one who fears the  
gods

And the gods love — that one"  
(He blush'd, nor said

What one)

"Has promised this, and may do more.  
Thou hast not many moons to wait until  
The bees have done their best; if then  
there come

Nor wax nor honey, let the tree be hewn."

"Zeus hath bestow'd on thee a prudent  
mind,"

See the glad sire: "but look thou often  
there,

And gather all the honey thou canst find  
In every crevice, over and above

What has been promised; would they  
reckon that?"

Rhaicos went daily; but the nymph as  
oft,

Invisible. To play at love, she knew,  
Stopping its breathings when it breathes  
most soft,

Is sweeter than to play on any pipe.

She play'd on his: she fed upon his sighs;  
They pleased her when they gently  
waved her hair,

Cooling the pulses of her purple veins,  
And when her absence brought them out,  
they pleased.

Even among the fondest of them all,  
What mortal or immortal maid is more  
Content with giving happiness than pain?  
One day he was returning from the wood  
Despondently. She pitied him, and said  
"Come back!" and twined her fingers in  
the hem

Above his shoulder. Then she led his  
steps

To a cool rill that ran o'er level sand  
Through lentisk and through oleander,  
there

Bathed she his feet, lifting them on her  
lap

When bathed, and drying them in both  
her hands.

He dared complain; for those who most  
are loved

Most dare it; but not harsh was his com-  
plaint.

"O thou inconstant!" said he, "if stern  
law

Bind thee, or will, stronger than sternest  
law

O, let me know henceforward when to  
hope

The fruit of love that grows for me but  
here."

He spake; and pluck'd it from its pliant  
stem.

"Impatient Rhaicos! Why thus intercept  
The answer I would give? There is a bee  
Whom I have fed, a bee who knows my  
thoughts

And executes my wishes: I will send  
That messenger. If ever thou art false,  
Drawn by another, own it not, but drive  
My bee away; then shall I know my fate,  
And — for thou must be wretched — weep  
at thine.

But often as my heart persuades to lay  
Its cares on thine and throb itself to rest,  
Expect her with thee, whether it be morn  
Or eve, at any time when woods are  
safe."

Day after day the Hours beheld them  
blessed,

And season after season: years had past,  
Blessed were they still. He who asserts  
that Love

Ever is sated of sweet things, the same  
Sweet things he fretted for in earlier  
days,

Never, by Zeus! loved he a Hamadryad.

The nights had now grown longer,  
and perhaps

The Hamadryads find them lone and dull  
Among their woods; one did, alas! She  
called

Her faithful bee: 'twas when all bees  
should sleep,

And all did sleep but hers. She was  
sent forth

To bring that light which never wintry  
blast

Blows out, nor rain nor snow extinguishes,  
The light that shines from loving eyes  
upon

Eyes that love back, till they can see no  
more.

Rhaicos was sitting at his father's  
hearth:

Between them stood the table, not o'er-  
spread

With fruits which autumn now profusely  
bore,

Nor anise cakes, nor odorous wine; but  
there



The draft-board was expanded; at which  
game

Triumphant sat old Thallinos; the son  
was puzzled, vexed, discomfited, dis-  
traught.

A buzz was at his ear: up went his hand,  
And it was heard no longer. The poor  
bee

Return'd (but not until the morn shone  
bright)

And found the Hamadryad with her head  
Upon her aching wrist, and showed one  
wing

Half-broken off, the other's meshes marr'd,  
And there were bruises which no eye  
could see

Saving a Hamadryad's.

At this sight  
Down fell the languid brow, both hands  
fell down,

A shriek was carried to the ancient hall  
Of Thallinos: he heard it not: his son  
Heard it, and ran forthwith into the wood.  
No bark was on the tree, no leaf was  
green,

The trunk was riven through. From that  
day forth

Nor word nor whisper sooth'd his ear,  
nor sound

Even of insect wing; but loud laments  
The woodmen and the shepherds one  
long year

Heard day and night; for Rhaicos would  
not quit

The solitary place, but moan'd and died.

Hence milk and honey wonder not, O  
guest,

To find set duly on the hollow stone.

1846.

## ACON AND RHODOPÉ; OR, INCONSTANCY

[A SEQUEL]

THE Year's twelve daughters had in turn  
gone by,

Of measured pace though varying mien  
all twelve,

Some froward, some sedater, some  
adorn'd

For festival, some reckless of attire.

The snow had left the mountain-top;  
fresh flowers

Had withered in the meadow; fig and  
and prune

Hung wrinkling; the last apple glow'd  
amid

Its freckled leaves; and weary oxen  
blink'd

Between the trodden corn and twisted  
vine,

Under whose bunches stood the empty  
crate,

To creak ere long beneath them carried  
home.

This was the season when twelve months  
before,

O gentle Hamadryad, true to love!

Thy mansion, thy dim mansion in the  
wood

Was blasted and laid desolate; but none  
Dared violate its precincts, none dared  
pluck

The moss beneath it, which alone re-  
main'd

Of what was thine.

Old Thallinos sat mute  
In solitary sadness. The strange tale  
(Not until Rhaicos died, but then the  
whole)

Echeion had related, whom no force  
Could ever make look back upon the oaks.

The father said, "Echeion! thou must  
weigh,

Carefully, and with steady hand, enough  
(Although no longer comes the store as  
once!)

Of wax to burn all day and night upon  
That hollow stone where milk and honey  
lie:

So may the gods, so may the dead, be  
pleas'd!"

Thallinos bore it thither in the morn,  
And lighted it and left it.

First of those  
Who visited upon this solemn day  
The Hamadryad's oak, were Rhodopé  
And Acon; of one age, one hope, one  
trust.

Graceful was she as was the nymph  
whose fate

She sorrowed for: he slender, pale, and  
first

Lapp'd by the flame of love: his father's  
lands

Were fertile, herds lowed over them afar.  
Now stood the two aside the hollow stone

And look'd with steadfast eyes toward  
the oak

Shivered and black and bare.

“May never we  
Love as they loved!” said Acon. She  
at this

Smiled, for he said not what he meant to  
say,

And thought not of its bliss, but of its  
end.

He caught the flying smile, and blush'd,  
and vow'd

Nor time nor other power, whereto the  
might

Of love hath yielded and may yield  
again,

Should alter his.

The father of the youth  
Wanted not beauty for him, wanted not  
Song, that could lift earth's weight from  
off his heart,

Discretion, that could guide him thro'  
the world,

Innocence, that could clear his way to  
heaven;

Silver and gold and land, not green before  
The ancestral gate, but purple under  
skies

Bending far off, he wanted for his heir.

Fathers have given life, but virgin  
heart

They never gave; and dare they then  
control

Or check it harshly? dare they break a  
bond

Girt round it by the holiest Power on  
high?

Acon was grieved, he said, grieved  
bitterly,

But Acon had complied . . . 'twas duti-  
ful:

Crush thy own heart, Man! Man! but  
fear to wound

The gentler, that relies on thee alone,  
By thee created, weak or strong by thee;  
Touch it not but for worship; watch be-  
fore

Its sanctuary; nor leave it till are closed  
The temple-doors and the last lamp is  
spent.

Rhodopé, in her soul's waste solitude,  
Sate mournful by the dull-resounding  
sea,

Often not hearing it, and many tears  
Had the cold breezes hardened on her  
cheek.

Meanwhile he sauntered in the wood of  
oaks,

Nor shun'd to look upon the hollow  
stone

That held the milk and honey, nor to  
lay

His plighted hand where recently 'twas  
laid

Opposite hers, when finger playfully  
Advanced and pushed back finger, on  
each side.

He did not think of this, as she would do  
If she were there alone.

The day was hot;  
The moss invited him; it cool'd his  
cheek,

It cool'd his hands; he thrust them into  
it

And sank to slumber. Never was there  
dream

Divine as his. He saw the Hamadryad.  
She took him by the arm and led him on  
Along a valley, where profusely grew  
The smaller lilies with their pendent  
bells,

And, hiding under mint, chill drosera,  
The violet shy of butting cyclamen,  
The feathery fern, and, browser of moist  
banks,

Her offspring round her, the soft straw-  
berry;

The quivering spray of ruddy tamarisk,  
The oleander's light-haired progeny  
Breathing bright freshness in each other's  
face,

And graceful rose, bending her brow,  
with cup

Of fragrance and of beauty, boon for  
Gods.

The fragrance fill'd his breast with such  
delight

His senses were bewildered, and he  
thought

He saw again the face he most had loved.  
He stopped: the Hamadryad at his side  
Now stood between: then drew him far-  
ther off:

He went, compliant as before: but soon  
Verdure had ceased: altho' the ground  
was smooth,

Nothing was there delightful. At this  
change

He would have spoken, but his guide  
repressed

All questioning, and said,  
“Weak youth! what brought

Thy footstep to this wood, my native  
haunt,

My life-long residence? this bank, where  
 first  
 I sate with him . . . the faithful ( now I  
 know,  
 Too late!) the faithful Rhaicos. Haste  
 thee home:  
 Be happy, if thou canst; but come no  
 more  
 Where those whom death alone could  
 sever, died."  
 He started up: the moss whereon he  
 slept  
 Was dried and withered: deadlier pale-  
 ness spread  
 Over his cheek; he sickened: and the  
 sire  
 Had land enough; it held his only son.  
 1847.

#### MENELAUS AND HELEN AT TROY

*After the fall of Troy, Helen is pursued by  
 Menelaus up the steps of the palace;  
 an old attendant deprecates and inter-  
 cepts his vengeance.*

*Menelaus.* Out of my way! Off! or  
 my sword may smite thee  
 Heedless of venerable age. And thou  
 Fugitive! stop. Stand, traitress, on that  
 stair —  
 Thou mountest not another, by the gods!  
 Now take the death thou meritest, the  
 death  
 Zeus who presides o'er hospitality,  
 And every other god whom thou hast  
 left,  
 And every other who abandons thee  
 In this accursed city, sends at last.  
 Turn, vilest of vile slaves! turn, para-  
 mour  
 Of what all other women hate, of cowards,  
 Turn, lest this hand wrench back thy  
 head, and toss  
 It and its odors to the dust and flames.  
*Helen.* Welcome, the death thou  
 promisest! Not fear  
 But shame, obedience, duty, make me  
 turn.

*Menelaus.* Duty! false harlot!

*Helen.* Name too true! severe  
 Precursor to the blow that is to fall.  
 It should alone suffice for killing me.

*Menelaus.* Ay, weep: be not the only  
 one in Troy

Who wails not on this day — its last —  
 the day  
 Thou and thy crimes darken with dead  
 on dead.

*Helen.* Spare! spare! O let the last  
 that falls be me,

There are but young and old.

*Menelaus.* There are but guilty  
 Where thou art, and the sword strikes  
 none amiss.

Hearst thou not the creeping blood buzz  
 near

Like flies? or wouldst thou rather hear  
 it hiss

Louder, against the flaming roofs thrown  
 down

Wherewith the streets are pathless? Ay,  
 but vengeance

Springs over all; and Nemesis and Atè  
 Drove back the flying ashes with both  
 hands.

I never saw thee weep till now: and  
 now

There is no pity in thy tears. The tiger  
 Leaves not her young athirst for the first  
 milk,

As thou didst. Thine could scarce have  
 clasped thy knee

If she had felt thee leave her.

*Helen.* O my child!

My only one! thou livest: 'tis enough;  
 Hate me, abhor me, curse me — these are  
 duties —

Call me but Mother in the shades of  
 death!

She now is twelve years old, when the bud  
 swells

And the first colors of uncertain life

Begin to tinge it.

*Menelaus (aside.)* Can she think  
 of home?

Hers once, mine yet, and sweet Her-  
 mionè's!

Is there one spark that cheer'd my hearth,  
 one left,

For thee, my last of love!

Scorn, righteous scorn  
 Blows it from me — but thou mayst —  
 never, never —

Thou shalt not see her even there. The  
 slave

On earth shall scorn thee, and the damn'd  
 below.

*Helen.* Delay not either fate. If  
 death is mercy,

Send me among the captives; so that Zeus

May see his offspring led in chains away,  
And thy hard brother, pointing with his sword

At the last wretch that crouches on the shore,

Cry, "She alone shall never sail for Greece!"

*Menelaus.* Hast thou more words?

Her voice is musical  
As the young maids who sing to Artemis:  
How glossy is that yellow braid my grasp  
Seiz'd and let loose! Ah! can then years  
have past

Since — but the children of the gods, like them,

Suffer not age.

*Helen!* speak honestly,  
And thus escape my vengeance — was it force

That bore thee off?

*Helen.* It was some evil god.

*Menelaus.* Helping that hated man?

*Helen.* How justly hated!

*Menelaus.* By thee too?

*Helen.* Hath he not made thee unhappy?

O do not strike.

*Menelaus.* Wretch!

*Helen.* Strike, but do not speak.

*Menelaus.* Lest thou remember me against thy will.

*Helen.* Lest I look up and see you wroth and sad,  
Against my will; O! how against my will

They know above, they who perhaps can pity.

*Menelaus.* They shall not save thee.

*Helen.* Then indeed they pity.

*Menelaus.* Prepare for death.

*Helen.* Not from that hand: 'twould pain you.

*Menelaus.* Touch not my hand. — Easily dost thou drop it!

*Helen.* Easy are all things, do but thou command.

*Menelaus.* Look up then.

*Helen.* To the hardest proof of all  
I am now bidden; bid me not look up.

*Menelaus.* She looks as when I led her on behind

The torch and fife, and when the blush o'erspread

Her girlish face at tripping in the myrtle  
On the first step before the wreathèd gate.  
Approach me. Fall not on thy knees.

*Helen.* The hand  
That is to slay me, best may slay me thus.  
I dare no longer see the light of heaven,  
Not thine — alas! the light of heaven to me.

*Menelaus.* Follow me.

She holds out both arms — and now  
Drops them again. — She comes. — Why stoppest thou?

*Helen.* O Menelaus! could thy heart know mine,

As once it did — for then they did converse,

Generous the one, the other not unworthy —

Thou wouldst find sorrow deeper even than guilt.

*Menelaus.* And I must lead her by the hand again?

Nought shall persuade me. Never. She draws back —

The true alone and loving sob like her.  
Come Helen! [*He takes her hand.*]

*Helen.* O let never Greek see this!  
Hide me from Argos, from Amyclai hide me,

Hide me from all.

*Menelaus.* Thy anguish is too strong  
For me to strive with.

*Helen.* Leave it all to me.

*Menelaus.* Peace! Peace! The wind,  
I hope, is fair for Sparta. 1847.

## ÆSCHYLOS AND SOPHOCLES

*Sophocles.* Thou goest then, and leavest none behind

Worthy to rival thee!

*Æschylos.* Nay, say not so.  
Whose is the hand that now is pressing mine?

A hand I may not ever press again!  
What glorious forms hath it brought boldly forth

From Pluto's realm! The blind old *Eëdipos*

Was led on one side by *Antigone*,  
*Sophocles* propped the other.

*Sophocles.* *Sophocles*  
Sooth'd not *Prometheus* chain'd upon his rock,

Keeping the vultures and the Gods away;  
*Sophocles* is not greater than the chief  
Who conquered *Ilion*, nor could he revenge

His murder, or stamp everlasting brand  
Upon the brow of that adulterous wife.

*Æschylos.* Live, and do more.

Thine is the Lemnian isle,  
And thou hast placed the arrows in the  
hand

Of Philoctetes, hast assuaged his wounds  
And given his aid without which Greece  
had fail'd.

*Sophocles.* I did indeed drive off the  
pest of flies;

We also have our pest of them which buzz  
About our honey, darken it, and sting;  
We laugh at them, for under hands like  
ours,

Without the wing that Philoctetes shook,  
One single feather crushes the whole  
swarm.

I must be grave,

Hath Sicily such charms

Above our Athens? Many charms hath  
she,

But she hath kings. Accursed be the race!  
*Æschylos.* But where kings honor  
better men than they

Let kings be honored too.

The laurel crown

Surmounts the golden; wear it; and  
farewell. 1847.

## SHAKESPEARE AND MILTON

THE tongue of England, that which  
myriads

Have spoken and will speak, were paralyzed

Hereafter, but two mighty men stand  
forth

Above the flight of ages, two alone;  
One crying out,

*All nations spoke thro' me.*

The other:

*True; and thro' this trumpet burst*

*God's word; the fall of Angels, and the  
doom*

*First of immortal, then of mortal, Man.*

*Glory! be glory! not to me, to God.*

1853.

## TO YOUTH

WHERE art thou gone, light-ankled  
Youth?

With wing at either shoulder,  
And smile that never left thy mouth  
Until the Hours grew colder:

Then somewhat seem'd to whisper near

That thou and I must part;

I doubted it: I felt no fear,  
No weight upon the heart:

If aught befell it, Love was by

And roll'd it off again;

So, if there ever was a sigh,  
'Twas not a sigh of pain.

I may not call thee back; but thou

Returnest when the hand

Of gentle Sleep waves o'er my brow  
His poppy-crested wand;

Then smiling eyes bend over mine,

Then lips once pressed invite;

But sleep hath given a silent sign,  
And both, alas! take flight.

1853.

## TO AGE

WELCOME, old friend! These many years

Have we lived door by door:

The Fates have laid aside their shears  
Perhaps for some few more.

I was indocile at an age

When better boys were taught,

But thou at length hast made me sage,  
If I am sage in aught.

Little I know from other men,

Too little they from me,

But thou hast pointed well the pen  
That writes these lines to thee.

Thanks for expelling Fear and Hope,

One vile, the other vain;

One's scourge, the other's telescope,  
I shall not see again:

Rather what lies before my feet

My notice shall engage —

He who hath braved Youth's dizzy heat  
Dreads not the frost of Age.

1853.

## THE CHRYSOLITES AND RUBIES BACCHUS BRINGS

THE chrysolites and rubies Bacchus brings

To crown the feast where swells the  
broad-vein'd brow,

Where maidens blush at what the min-  
strel sings,

They who have coveted may covet now.



Bring me, in cool alcove, the grape un-  
crushed,

The peach of pulpy cheek and down  
mature,

Where every voice (but bird's or child's)  
is hushed,

And every thought, like the brook  
nigh, runs pure. 1853.

SO THEN, I FEEL NOT DEEPLY!

So then, I feel not deeply! if I did,  
I should have seized the pen and pierced  
therewith

The passive world!

And thus thou reasonest?

Well hast thou known the lover's, not so  
well

The poet's heart: while that heart bleeds,  
the hand

Presses it close. Grief must run on and  
pass

Into near Memory's more quiet shade

Before it can compose itself in song.

He who is agonized and turns to show

His agony to those who sit around,  
Seizes the pen in vain: thought, fancy,

power,

Rush back into his bosom; all the strength  
Of genius can not draw them into light

From under mastering Grief; but Mem-  
ory,

The Muse's mother, nurses, rears them up,  
Informs, and keeps them with her all her

days. 1853.

YEARS, MANY PARTI-COLORED  
YEARS

YEARS, many parti-colored years,

Some have crept on, and some have  
flown

Since first before me fell those tears

I never could see fall alone.

Years, not so many, are to come,

Years not so varied, when from you

One more will fall: when, carried home,

I see it not, nor hear *adieu*. 1853.

I WONDER NOT THAT YOUTH  
REMAINS

I WONDER not that Youth remains

With you, wherever else she flies:

Where could she find such fair domains,

Where bask beneath such sunny eyes?  
1853.

## ON MUSIC

MANY love music but for music's sake,  
Many because her touches can awake

Thoughts that repose within the breast  
half-dead,

And rise to follow where she loves to  
lead.

What various feelings come from days  
gone by!

What tears from far-off sources dim the  
eye!

Few, when light fingers with sweet voices  
play

And melodies swell, pause, and melt  
away,

Mind how at every touch, at every tone,  
A spark of life hath glisten'd and hath

gone. 1853.

ROSE AYLMER'S HAIR, GIVEN BY  
HER SISTER

BEAUTIFUL spoils! borne off from van-  
quished death!

Upon my heart's high altar shall ye  
lie,

Moved but by only one adorer's breath,  
Retaining youth, rewarding constancy.

1853.

## DEATH STANDS ABOVE ME

DEATH stands above me, whispering low

I know not what into my ear:

Of his strange language all I know

Is, there is not a word of fear. 1853.

ON HIS SEVENTY-FIFTH BIRTH-  
DAY

I STROVE with none; for none was worth  
my strife,

Nature I loved, and next to Nature,  
Art;

I warmed both hands before the fire of  
life,

It sinks, and I am ready to depart.

1853.

## ON THE DEATH OF SOUTHEY

It was a dream (ah! what is not a  
dream?)

In which I wander'd thro' a boundless  
space

Peopled by those that peopled earth ere-  
while.

But who conducted me? That gentle  
Power,

Gentle as Death, Death's brother. On  
his brow

Some have seen poppies; and perhaps  
among

The many flowers about his wavy curls  
Poppies there might be; roses I am sure  
I saw, and dimmer amaranths between.  
Lightly I thought I leaped across a grave  
Smelling of cool fresh turf, and sweet it  
smelt.

I would, but must not linger; I must on,  
To tell my dream before forgetfulness  
Sweeps it away, or breaks or changes it.  
I was among the shades (if shades they  
were)

And look'd around me for some friendly  
hand

To guide me on my way, and tell me all  
That compass'd me around. I wish'd to  
find

One no less firm or ready than the guide  
Of Alighieri, trustier far than he,  
Higher in intellect, more conversant  
With earth and heaven and whatso lies  
between.

He stood before me — Southey.

"Thou art he,"  
Said I, "whom I was wishing."

"That I know,"  
Replied the genial voice and radiant eye.  
"We may be question'd, question we may  
not;

For that might cause to bubble forth  
again

Some bitter spring which crossed the  
pleasantest

And shadiest of our paths."

"I do not ask,"

Said I, "about your happiness; I see  
The same serenity as when we walked  
Along the downs of Clifton. Fifty years  
Have roll'd behind us since that summer-  
tide,

Nor thirty fewer since along the lake  
Of Lario, to Bellaggio villa-crown'd,  
Thro' the crisp waves I urged my sideling  
bark,

Amid sweet salutations off the shore  
From lordly Milan's proudly courteous  
dames."

"Landor! I well remember it," said he,  
"I had just lost my first-born only boy,

And then the heart is tender; lightest  
things

Sink into it, and dwell there evermore."

The words were not yet spoken when

the air  
Blew balmier; and around the parent's  
neck

An Angel threw his arms: it was that  
son.

"Father! I felt you wished me," said  
the boy,

"Behold me here!"

Gentle the sire's embrace,  
Gentle his tone. "See here your father's  
friend!"

He gazed into my face, then meekly  
said

"He whom my father loves hath his re-  
ward

On earth; a richer one awaits him here."

1853.

#### ON SOUTHEY'S DEATH

FRIENDS! hear the words my wandering  
thoughts would say,

And cast them into shape some other  
day.

Southey, my friend of forty years, is  
gone,

And, shattered by the fall, I stand alone.  
1858.

#### HEART'S-EASE

THERE is a flower I wish to wear,

But not until first worn by you . .

Heart's-ease . . of all earth's flowers  
most rare;

Bring it; and bring enough for two.  
1858.

#### THE THREE ROSES<sup>1</sup>

WHEN the buds began to burst,

Long ago, with Rose the First,

I was walking; joyous then

Far above all other men,

Till before us up there stood

Britonferry's oaken wood,

Whispering, "*Happy as thou art,*

*Happiness and thou must part.*"

<sup>1</sup>See pages 410 and 423. "Rose the Third" was the daughter of "the Second Rose," and thus the grand-niece of Rose Aylmer.

Many summers have gone by  
 Since a Second Rose and I  
 (Rose from that same stem) have told  
 This and other tales of old.  
 She upon her wedding-day  
 Carried home my tenderest lay:  
 From her lap I now have heard  
 Gleeful, chirping, Rose the Third,  
 Not for *her* this hand of mine  
 Rhyme with nuptial wreath shall twine;  
 Cold and torpid it must lie,  
 Mute the tongue and closed the eye.

1858.

### LATELY OUR SONGSTERS LOI- TER'D IN GREEN LANES

LATELY our songsters loiter'd in green  
 lanes,  
 Content to catch the ballads of the  
 plains;  
 I fancied I had strength enough to  
 climb  
 A loftier station at no distant time,  
 And might securely from intrusion doze  
 Upon the flowers thro' which Ilissus  
 flows.  
 In those pale olive grounds all voices  
 cease,  
 And from afar dust fills the paths of  
 Greece.  
 My slumber broken and my doublet  
 torn,  
 I find the laurel also bears a thorn.

1863.

### THESEUS AND HIPPOLYTA<sup>1</sup>

*Hippolyta.* Eternal hatred I have  
 sworn against  
 The persecutor of my sisterhood;  
 In vain, proud son of Ægeus, hast thou  
 snapped  
 Their arrows and derided them; in vain  
 Leadest thou me a captive; I can die,  
 And die I will.

*Theseus.* Nay; many are the years  
 Of youth and beauty for Hippolyta.

<sup>1</sup>Written by Landor immediately before its publication, at the age of eighty-eight. Perhaps the only other example in literature of such vigor and creative power, at such an age, is that of Sophocles.

*Hippolyta.* I scorn my youth, I hate  
 my beauty. Go!

Monster! of all the monsters in these  
 wilds

Most frightful and most odious to my  
 sight.

*Theseus.* I boast not that I saved thee  
 from the bow

Of Scythian.

*Hippolyta.* And for what? To die  
 disgraced.

Strong as thou art, yet thou art not so  
 strong

As Death is, when we call him for sup-  
 port.

*Theseus.* Him too will I ward off; he  
 strikes me first,

Hippolyta, long after, when these eyes  
 Are closed, and when the knee that sup-  
 plicates

Can bend no more.

*Hippolyta.* Is the man mad?

*Theseus.* He is.

*Hippolyta.* So, thou canst tell one  
 truth, however false

In other things.

*Theseus.* What other? Thou dost  
 pause,

And thine eyes wander over the smooth  
 turf

As if some gem (but gem thou wearest  
 not)

Had fallen from the remnant of thy  
 hair.

Hippolyta! speak plainly, answer me,  
 What have I done to raise thy fear or  
 hate?

*Hippolyta.* Fear I despise, perfidy I  
 abhor.

Unworthy man! did Heracles delude  
 The maids who trusted him?

*Theseus.* Did ever I?

Whether he did or not, they never told  
 me:

I would have chided him.

*Hippolyta.* Thou chide him! thou!

The Spartan mothers well remember thee.

*Theseus.* Scorn adds no beauty to the  
 beautiful.

Heracles was beloved by Omphale,  
 He never parted from her, but obey'd  
 Her slightest wish, as Theseus will Hip-  
 polyta's.

*Hippolyta.* Then leave me, leave me  
 instantly; I know

The way to my own country.

*Theseus.* This command,  
And only this, my heart must disobey.  
My country shall be thine, and there thy  
state

Regal.

*Hippolyta.* Am I a child? Give me  
my own,  
And keep for weaker heads thy diadems.  
Thermodon I shall never see again,  
Brightest of rivers, into whose clear  
depth

My mother plunged me from her warmer  
breast,

And taught me early to divide the waves  
With arms each day more strong, and  
soon to chase

And overtake the father swan, nor heed  
His hoarser voice or his uplifted wing.  
Where are my sisters? are there any  
left?

*Theseus.* I hope it.

*Hippolyta.* And I fear it: theirs  
may be

A fate like mine; which, O ye Gods, for-  
bid!

*Theseus.* I pity thee, and would as-  
suage thy grief.

*Hippolyta.* Pity me not: thy anger I  
could bear.

*Theseus.* There is no place for anger  
where thou art.

Commiseration even men may feel  
For those who want it: even the fiercer  
beasts

Lick the sore-wounded of a kindred race,  
Hearing their cry, albeit they may not  
help.

*Hippolyta.* This is no falsehood: and  
can he be false

Who speaks it?

I remember not the time  
When I have wept, it was so long ago.  
Thou forcest tears from me, because . . .  
because . . .

I cannot hate thee as I ought to do.

1863.

## AN AGED MAN WHO LOVED TO DOZE AWAY

AN aged man who loved to doze away  
An hour by daylight, for his eyes were dim,  
And he had seen too many suns go down  
And rise again, dreamed that he saw two  
forms

Of radiant beauty; he would clasp them  
both,

But both flew stealthily away. He cried  
In his wild dream,

"I never thought, O youth,  
That thou, altho' so cherished, would'st  
return,

But I did think that he who came with  
thee,

Love, who could swear more sweetly  
than birds sing,

Would never leave me comfortless and  
lone."

A sigh broke through his slumber, not  
the last. 1863.

## WELL I REMEMBER HOW YOU SMILED

WELL I remember how you smiled  
To see me write your name upon  
The soft sea-sand. "*O! what a child!*  
*You think you're writing upon stone!*"

I have since written what no tide  
Shall ever wash away, what men  
Unborn shall read o'er ocean wide  
And find Ianthe's name again.

1863.

## TO MY NINTH DECADE

To my ninth decade I have totter'd on,  
And no soft arm bends now my steps to  
steady;

She, who once led me where she would  
is gone,

So when he calls me, Death shall find  
me ready. 1863.

# TENNYSON

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# TENNYSON

## CLARIBEL

### A MELODY

WHERE Claribel low-lieth  
The breezes pause and die,  
Letting the rose-leaves fall;  
But the solemn oak-tree sigheth,  
Thick-leaved, ambrosial,  
With an ancient melody  
Of an inward agony,  
Where Claribel low-lieth.

At eve the beetle boometh  
Athwart the thicket lone;  
At noon the wild bee hummeth  
About the moss'd headstone:  
At midnight the moon cometh,  
And looketh down alone.  
Her song the lintwhite swelleth,  
The clear-voiced mavis dwelleth,  
The callow throstle lispeth,  
The slumbrous wave outwellets,  
The babbling runnel crispeth,  
The hollow grot replieth  
Where Claribel low-lieth. 1830.

## THE POET

THE poet in a golden clime was born,  
With golden stars above;  
Dower'd with the hate of hate, the scorn  
of scorn,  
The love of love.

He saw thro' life and death, thro' good  
and ill,  
He saw thro' his own soul.  
The marvel of the everlasting will,  
An open scroll,

Before him lay; with echoing feet he  
threaded  
The secretest walks of fame:  
The viewless arrows of his thoughts were  
headed  
And wing'd with flame,

Like Indian reeds blown from his silver  
tongue,  
And so fierce a flight,  
From Calpe unto Caucasus they sung,  
Filling with light

And vagrant melodies the winds which  
bore  
Them earthward till they lit;  
Then, like the arrow-seeds of the field  
flower,  
The fruitful wit

Cleaving took root, and springing forth  
anew  
Where'er they fell, behold,  
Like to the mother plant in semblance,  
grew  
A flower all gold,

And bravely furnish'd all abroad to fling  
The winged shafts of truth,  
To throng with stately blooms the breath-  
ing spring  
Of Hope and Youth.

So many minds did gird their orbs with  
beams,  
Tho' one did fling the fire;  
Heaven flow'd upon the soul in many  
dreams  
Of high desire.

Thus truth was multiplied on truth, the  
world  
Like one great garden show'd,  
And thro' the wreaths of floating dark  
upcurl'd,  
Rare sunrise flow'd.

And Freedom rear'd in that august sun-  
rise  
Her beautiful bold brow,  
When rites and forms before his burning  
eyes  
Melted like snow.

There was no blood upon her maiden robes  
 Sunn'd by those orient skies;  
 But round about the circles of the globes  
 Of her keen eyes

And in her raiment's hem was traced in flame  
 WISDOM, a name to shake  
 All evil dreams of power — a sacred name.  
 And when she spake,

Her words did gather thunder as they ran,  
 And as the lightning to the thunder  
 Which follows it, riving the spirit of man,  
 Making earth wonder,

So was their meaning to her words. No sword  
 Of wrath her right arm whirl'd,  
 But one poor poet's scroll, and with *his* word  
 She shook the world. 1830.

### MARIANA

"Mariana in the moated grange."  
*Measure for Measure.*

With blackest moss the flower-plots  
 Were thickly crusted, one and all;  
 The rusted nails fell from the knots  
 That held the pear to the gable-wall.  
 The broken sheds look'd sad and strange:  
 Unlifted was the clinking latch;  
 Weeded and worn the ancient thatch  
 Upon the lonely moated grange.  
 She only said, "My life is dreary,  
 He cometh not," she said;  
 She said, "I am aweary, aweary,  
 I would that I were dead!"

Her tears fell with the dews at even;  
 Her tears fell ere the dews were dried;  
 She could not look on the sweet heaven,  
 Either at morn or eventide.  
 After the flitting of the bats,  
 When thickest dark did trance the sky,  
 She drew her casement-curtain by,  
 And glanced athwart the glooming flats.  
 She only said, "The night is dreary,  
 He cometh not," she said;  
 She said, "I am aweary, aweary,  
 I would that I were dead!"

Upon the middle of the night,  
 Waking she heard the night-fowl crow;  
 The cock sung out an hour ere light;  
 From the dark fen the oxen's low  
 Came to her; without hope of change,  
 In sleep she seem'd to walk forlorn,  
 Till cold winds woke the gray-eyed morn  
 About the lonely moated grange.  
 She only said, "The day is dreary,  
 He cometh not," she said;  
 She said, "I am aweary, aweary,  
 I would that I were dead!"

About a stone-cast from the wall  
 A sluice with blacken'd waters slept,  
 And o'er it many, round and small,  
 The cluster'd marish-mosses crept.  
 Hard by a poplar shook alway,  
 All silver-green with gnarled bark:  
 For leagues no other tree did mark  
 The level waste, the rounding gray.  
 She only said, "My life is dreary,  
 He cometh not," she said;  
 She said, "I am aweary, aweary,  
 I would that I were dead!"

And ever when the moon was low,  
 And the shrill winds were up and away,  
 In the white curtain, to and fro,  
 She saw the gusty shadow sway.  
 But when the moon was very low,  
 And wild winds bound within their cell,  
 The shadow of the poplar fell  
 Upon her bed, across her brow.  
 She only said, "The night is dreary,  
 He cometh not," she said;  
 She said, "I am aweary, aweary,  
 I would that I were dead!"

All day within the dreamy house,  
 The doors upon their hinges creak'd;  
 The blue fly sung in the pane; the mouse  
 Behind the mouldering wainscot  
 shriek'd,  
 Or from the crevice peer'd about.  
 Old faces glimmer'd thro' the doors,  
 Old footsteps trod the upper floors,  
 Old voices called her from without.  
 She only said, "My life is dreary,  
 He cometh not," she said;  
 She said, "I am aweary, aweary,  
 I would that I were dead!"

The sparrow's chirrup on the roof,  
 The slow clock ticking, and the sound

Which to the wooing wind aloof  
 The poplar made, did all confound  
 Her sense; but most she loathed the hour  
 When the thick-moted sunbeam lay  
 Athwart the chambers, and the day  
 Was sloping toward his western bower.  
 Then said she, "I am very dreary,  
 He will not come," she said;  
 She wept, "I am aweary, aweary,  
 O God, that I were dead!"  
 1830, 1842.

## THE MERMAN

## I

Who would be  
 A merman bold,  
 Sitting alone,  
 Singing alone  
 Under the sea,  
 With a crown of gold,  
 On a throne?

## II

I would be a merman bold,  
 I would sit and sing the whole of the day;  
 I would fill the sea-halls with a voice of  
 power;  
 But at night I would roam abroad and  
 play  
 With the mermaids in and out of the  
 rocks,  
 Dressing their hair with the white sea-  
 flower;  
 And holding them back by their flowing  
 locks  
 I would kiss them often under the sea,  
 And kiss them again till they kiss'd me  
 Laughingly, laughingly;  
 And then we would wander away, away,  
 To the pale-green sea-groves straight and  
 high,  
 Chasing each other merrily.

## III

There would be neither moon nor star;  
 But the wave would make music above us  
 afar —  
 Low thunder and light in the magic  
 night —  
 Neither moon nor star.  
 We would call aloud in the dreamy dells,  
 Call to each other and whoop and cry  
 All night, merrily, merrily.

They would pelt me with starry spangles  
 and shells,  
 Laughing and clapping their hands be-  
 tween,  
 All night, merrily, merrily,  
 But I would throw to them back in mine  
 Turkis and agate and almondine;  
 Then leaping out upon them unseen  
 I would kiss them often under the sea,  
 And kiss them again till they kiss'd me  
 Laughingly, laughingly.  
 O, what a happy life were mine  
 Under the hollow-hung ocean green!  
 Soft are the moss-beds under the sea;  
 We would live merrily, merrily.  
 1830, 1842.

## THE MERMAID

## I

Who would be  
 A mermaid fair,  
 Singing alone,  
 Combing her hair  
 Under the sea,  
 In a golden curl  
 With a comb of pearl,  
 On a throne?

## II

I would be a mermaid fair;  
 I would sing to myself the whole of the  
 day;  
 With a comb of pearl I would comb my  
 hair;  
 And still as I comb'd I would sing and say,  
 "Who is it loves me? who loves not me?"  
 I would comb my hair till my ringlets  
 would fall  
 Low adown, low adown,  
 From under my starry sea-bud crown  
 Low adown and around,  
 And I should look like a fountain of gold  
 Springing alone  
 With a shrill inner sound,  
 Over the throne  
 In the midst of the hall;  
 Till that great sea-snake under the sea  
 From his coiled sleeps in the central deeps  
 Would slowly trail himself sevenfold  
 Round the hall where I sate, and look in  
 at the gate  
 With his large calm eyes for the love of  
 me.



And all the mermen under the sea  
Would feel their immortality  
Die in their hearts for the love of me.

## III

But at night I would wander away, away,  
I would fling on each side my low-flow-  
ing locks,  
And lightly vault from the throne and play  
With the mermen in and out of the  
rocks;  
We would run to and fro, and hide and  
seek,  
On the broad sea-wolds in the crimson  
shells,  
Whose silvery spikes are nighest the sea.  
But if any came near I would call, and  
shriek,  
And adown the steep like a wave I would  
leap  
From the diamond-ledges that jut  
from the dells;  
For I would not be kiss'd by all who would  
list  
Of the bold merry mermen under the sea.  
They would sue me, and woo me, and  
flatter me,  
In the purple twilights under the sea;  
But the king of them all would carry me,  
Woo me, and win me, and marry me,  
In the branching jaspers under the sea.  
Then all the dry pied things that be  
In the hueless mosses under the sea  
Would curl round my silver feet silently,  
All looking up for the love of me.  
And if I should carol aloud, from aloft  
All things that are forked, and horned,  
and soft  
Would lean out from the hollow sphere of  
the sea,  
All looking down for the love of me.

1830, 1842.

THE LADY OF SHALOTT<sup>1</sup>

## PART I

ON either side the river lie  
Long fields of barley and of rye,  
That clothe the wold and meet the sky;  
And thro' the field the road runs by  
To many-tower'd Camelot;

And up and down the people go,  
Gazing where the lilies blow  
Round an island there below,  
The island of Shalott.

Willows whiten, aspens quiver,  
Little breezes dusk and shiver  
Thro' the wave that runs for ever  
By the island in the river  
Flowing down to Camelot.  
Four gray walls, and four gray towers,  
Overlook a space of flowers.  
And the silent isle imbowers  
The Lady of Shalott.

By the margin, willow-veil'd,  
Slide the heavy barges trail'd  
By slow horses; and unhail'd  
The shallop flitteth silken-sail'd  
Skimming down to Camelot;  
But who hath seen her wave her hand?  
Or at the casement seen her stand?  
Or is she known in all the land,  
The Lady of Shalott?

Only reapers, reaping early  
In among the bearded barley,  
Hear a song that echoes cheerly  
From the river winding clearly,  
Down to tower'd Camelot;  
And by the moon the reaper weary,  
Piling sheaves in uplands airy,  
Listening, whispers "T is the fairy  
Lady of Shalott."

## PART II

There she weaves by night and day  
A magic web with colors gay.  
She has heard a whisper say,  
A curse is on her if she stay  
To look down to Camelot.  
She knows not what the curse may be,  
And so she weaveth steadily,  
And little other care hath she,  
The Lady of Shalott.

And moving thro' a mirror clear  
That hangs before her all the year,  
Shadows of the world appear.  
There she sees the highway near  
Winding down to Camelot;  
There the river eddy whirls,  
And there the surly village-churls,  
And the red cloaks of market girls,  
Pass onward from Shalott.

<sup>1</sup> See the *Life of Tennyson*, by his Son, I, 116-117.

Sometimes a troop of damsels glad,  
 An abbot on an ambling pad,  
 Sometimes a curly shepherd-lad,  
 Or long-hair'd page in crimson clad,  
     Goes by to tower'd Camelot;  
 And sometimes thro' the mirror blue  
 The knights come riding two and two:  
 She hath no loyal knight and true,  
     The Lady of Shalott.

But in her web she still delights  
 To weave the mirror's magic sights,  
 For often thro' the silent nights  
 A funeral, with plumes and lights  
     And music, went to Camelot;  
 Or when the moon was overhead,  
 Came two young lovers lately wed:  
 "I am half sick of shadows," said  
     The Lady of Shalott.

## PART III

A bow-shot from her bower-eaves,  
 He rode between the barley-sheaves,  
 The sun came dazzling thro' the leaves,  
 And flamed upon the brazen greaves  
     Of bold Sir Lancelot.  
 A red-cross knight for ever kneel'd  
 To a lady in his shield,  
 That sparkled on the yellow field,  
     Beside remote Shalott.

To gemmy bridle glitter'd free,  
 Like to some branch of stars we see  
 Hung in the golden Galaxy.  
 The bridle bells rang merrily  
     As he rode down to Camelot;  
 And from his blazon'd baldric slung  
 A mighty silver bugle hung,  
 And as he rode his armor rung,  
     Beside remote Shalott.

All in the blue unclouded weather  
 Thick-jewell'd shone the saddle-leather,  
 The helmet and the helmet-feather  
 Burn'd like one burning flame together,  
     As he rode down to Camelot;  
 As often thro' the purple night,  
 Below the starry clusters bright,  
 Some bearded meteor, trailing light,  
     Moves over still Shalott.

His broad clear brow in sunlight glow'd;  
 On burnish'd hooves his war-horse trode;  
 From underneath his helmet flow'd  
 His coal-black curls as on he rode,  
     As he rode down to Camelot.

From the bank and from the river  
 He flash'd into the crystal mirror,  
 "Tirra lirra," by the river  
     Sang Sir Lancelot.

She left the web, she left the loom,  
 She made three paces thro' the room,  
 She saw the water-lily bloom,  
 She saw the helmet and the plume,  
     She look'd down to Camelot.  
 Out flew the web and floated wide;  
 The mirror crack'd from side to side;  
 "The curse is come upon me," cried  
     The Lady of Shalott.

## PART IV

In the stormy east-wind straining,  
 The pale yellow woods were waning,  
 The broad stream in his banks complain-  
     ing,  
 Heavily the low sky raining  
     Over tower'd Camelot;  
 Down she came and found a boat  
 Beneath a willow left afloat,  
 And round about the prow she wrote  
     *The Lady of Shalott.*

And down the river's dim expanse  
 Like some bold seer in a trance,  
 Seeing all his own mischance —  
 With a glassy countenance  
     Did she look to Camelot.  
 And at the closing of the day  
 She loosed the chain, and down she lay;  
 The broad stream bore her far away,  
     The Lady of Shalott.

Lying, robed in snowy white  
 That loosely flew to left and right —  
 The leaves upon her falling light —  
 Thro' the noises of the night  
     She floated down to Camelot;  
 And as the boat-head wound along  
 The willowy hills and fields among,  
 They heard her singing her last song,  
     The Lady of Shalott.

Heard a carol, mournful, holy,  
 Chanted loudly, chanted lowly,  
 Till her blood was frozen slowly  
 And her eyes were darken'd wholly  
     Turn'd to tower'd Camelot.  
 For ere she reach'd upon the tide  
 The first house by the water-side,  
 Singing in her song she died,  
     The Lady of Shalott.



That, while I speak of it, a little while  
My heart may wander from its deeper  
woe.

"O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,  
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
I waited underneath the dawning hills;  
Aloft the mountain-lawn was dewy-dark,  
And dewy-dark aloft the mountain-pine.  
Beautiful Paris, evil-hearted Paris,  
Leading a jet-black goat white-horn'd,  
white-hooved,  
Came up from reedy Simois all alone.

"O mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
Far off the torrent call'd me from the  
cleft;  
Far up the solitary morning smote  
The streaks of virgin snow. With down-  
dropt eyes  
I sat alone; white-breasted like a star  
Fronting the dawn he moved; a leopard  
skin  
Droop'd from his shoulder, but his sunny  
hair  
Cluster'd about his temples like a God's;  
And his cheek brighten'd as the foam-bow  
brightens  
When the wind blows the foam, and all  
my heart  
Went forth to embrace him coming ere  
he came.

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
He smiled, and opening out his milk-  
white palm  
Disclosed a fruit of pure Hesperian gold,  
That smelt ambrosially, and while I  
look'd  
And listen'd, the full-flowing river of  
speech  
Came down upon my heart:

'My own CEnone,  
Beautiful-brow'd CEnone, my own soul,  
Behold this fruit, whose gleaming rind  
ingraven  
"For the most fair," would seem to award  
it thine,  
As lovelier than whatever Oread haunt  
The knolls of Ida, loveliest in all grace  
Of movement, and the charm of married  
brows.'

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
He pressed the blossom of his lips to  
mine,

And added, 'This was cast upon the  
board.  
When all the full-faced presence of the  
Gods  
Ranged in the halls of Peleus; whereupon  
Rose feud, with question unto whom  
'twere due;  
But light-foot Iris brought it yester-eye,  
Delivering, that to me, by common voice  
Elected umpire, Herè comes to-day,  
Pallas and Aphrodite, claiming each  
This meed of fairest. Thou, within the  
cave  
Behind yon whispering tuft of oldest  
pine,  
Mayst well behold them unbeheld, un-  
heard  
Hear all, and see thy Paris, judge of  
Gods.'

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
It was the deep midnight; one silvery  
cloud  
Had lost his way between the piny sides  
Of this long glen. Then to the bower  
they came,  
Naked they came to that smooth  
swarded bower,  
And at their feet the crocus brake like  
fire,  
Violet, amaracus, and asphodel,  
Lotos and lilies; and a wind arose,  
And overhead the wandering ivy and vine,  
This way and that, in many a wild festoon  
Ran riot, garlanding the gnarled boughs  
With bunch and berry and flower thro'  
and thro'.

"O mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
On the tree-tops a crested peacock lit,  
And o'er him flow'd a golden cloud, and  
lean'd  
Upon him, slowly dropping fragrant dew.  
Then first I heard the voice of her to  
whom  
Coming thro' heaven, like a light that  
grows  
Larger and clearer, with one mind the  
Gods  
Rise up for reverence. She to Paris made  
Proffer of royal power, ample rule  
Unquestion'd, overflowing revenue  
Wherewith to embellish state, 'from many  
a vale  
And river-sunder'd champaign clothed  
with corn,

Or labor'd mine undrainable of ore.  
Honor,' she said, 'and homage, tax and  
toll,  
From many an inland town and haven  
large,  
Mast-throng'd beneath her shadowing  
citadel  
In glassy bays among her tallest towers.'

"O mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
Still she spake on and still she spake of  
power,  
'Which in all action is the end of all;  
Power fitted to the season; wisdom-bred  
And throned of wisdom — from all neigh-  
bor crowns  
Alliance and allegiance, till thy hand  
Fail from the sceptre-staff. Such boon  
from me,  
From me, heaven's queen, Paris, to thee  
king-born,  
A shepherd all thy life but yet king-born,  
Should come most welcome, seeing men,  
in power  
Only, are likest Gods, who have attain'd  
Rest in a happy place and quiet seats  
Above the thunder, with undying bliss  
In knowledge of their own supremacy.'

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
She ceased, and Paris held the costly fruit  
Out at arm's-length, so much the thought  
of power  
Flatter'd his spirit; but Pallas where  
she stood  
Somewhat apart, her clear and bared  
limbs  
O'erthwarted with the brazen-headed  
spear  
Upon her pearly shoulder leaning cold,  
The while, above, her full and earnest  
eye  
Over her snow-cold breast and angry  
cheek  
Kept watch, waiting decision, made reply:  
'Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-con-  
trol,  
These three alone lead life to sovereign  
power.  
Yet not for power (power of herself  
Would come uncall'd for) but to live by  
law,  
Acting the law we live by without fear;  
And, because right is right, to follow right  
Were wisdom in the scorn of conse-  
quence.'

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
Again she said: 'I woo thee not with  
gifts.

Sequel of guerdon could not alter me  
To fairer. Judge thou me by what I am,  
So shalt thou find me fairest.

Yet, indeed,  
If gazing on divinity disrobed  
Thy mortal eyes are frail to judge of  
fair,

Unbias'd by self-profit, O, rest thee sure  
That I shall love thee well and cleave to  
thee,

So that my vigor, wedded to thy blood,  
Shall strike within thy pulses, like a  
God's,

To push thee forward thro' a life of  
shocks,

Dangers, and deeds, until endurance  
grow

Sinew'd with action, and the full-grown  
will,

Circled thro' all experiences, pure law,  
Commeasure perfect freedom.'

"Here she ceas'd,  
And Paris ponder'd, and I cried, 'O  
Paris,

Give it to Pallas!' but he heard me not,  
Or hearing would not hear me, woe is me!

"O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,  
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.

Idalian Aphrodite beautiful,  
Fresh as the foam, new-bathed in Paphian  
wells,

With rosy slender fingers backward drew  
From her warm brows and bosom her  
deep hair

Ambrosial, golden round her lucid throat  
And shoulder; from the violets her light  
foot

Shone rosy-white, and o'er her rounded  
form

Between the shadows of the vine-bunches  
Floated the glowing sunlights, as she  
moved.

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
She with a subtle smile in her mild eyes,  
The herald of her triumph, drawing nigh  
Half-whisper'd in his ear, 'I promise  
thee

The fairest and most loving wife in  
Greece.'

She spoke and laugh'd; I shut my sight  
for fear;



But when I look'd, Paris had raised his  
arm,  
And I beheld great Herè's angry eyes,  
As she withdrew into the golden cloud,  
And I was left alone within the bower;  
And from that time to this I am alone,  
And I shall be alone until I die.

"Yet, mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
Fairest—why fairest wife? am I not  
fair?  
My love hath told me so a thousand  
times.  
Methinks I must be fair, for yesterday,  
When I past by, a wild and wanton pard,  
Eyed like the evening star, with playful  
tail  
Crouch'd fawning in the weed. Most  
loving is she?  
Ah me, my mountain shepherd, that my  
arms  
Were wound about thee, and my hot lips  
pressed  
Close, close to thine in that quick-falling  
dew  
Of fruitful kisses, thick as autumn rains  
Flash in the pools of whirling Simois!

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.  
They came, they cut away my tallest  
pines,  
My tall dark pines, that plumed the  
craggy ledge  
High over the blue gorge, and all be-  
tween  
The snowy peak and snow-white cataract  
Foster'd the callow eaglet—from be-  
neath  
Whose thick mysterious boughs in the  
dark morn  
The panther's roar came muffled, while  
I sat  
Low in the valley. Never, never more  
Shall lone Ænone see the morning mist  
Sweep thro' them; never see them over-  
laid  
With narrow moonlit slips of silver  
cloud,  
Between the loud stream and the trem-  
bling stars.

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.  
I wish that somewhere in the ruin'd folds,  
Among the fragments tumbled from the  
glens,  
Or the dry thickets, I could meet with her

The Abominable, that uninvited came  
Into the fair Peleïan banquet-hall,  
And cast the golden fruit upon the board,  
And bred this change; that I might  
speak my mind,  
And tell her to her face how much I hate  
Her presence, hated both of Gods and  
men.

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.  
Hath he not sworn his love a thousand  
times,  
In this green valley, under this green hill,  
Even on this hand, and sitting on this  
stone?  
Seal'd it with kisses? water'd it with  
tears?  
O happy tears, and how unlike to these!  
O happy heaven, how canst thou see my  
face?  
O happy earth, how canst thou bear my  
weight?  
O death, death, death, thou ever-floating  
cloud,  
There are enough unhappy on this earth,  
Pass by the happy souls, that love to  
live;  
I pray thee, pass before my light of life,  
And shadow all my soul, that I may die.  
Thou weighest heavy on the heart within,  
Weigh heavy on my eyelids; let me die.

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.  
I will not die alone, for fiery thoughts  
Do shape themselves within me, more  
and more,  
Whereof I catch the issue, as I hear  
Dead sounds at night come from the  
inmost hills,  
Like footsteps upon wool. I dimly see  
My far-off doubtful purpose, as a mother  
Conjectures of the features of her child  
Ere it is born. Her child!—a shudder  
comes  
Across me: never child be born of me,  
Unblest, to vex me with his father's eyes!

"O, mother, hear me yet before I die.  
Hear me, O earth. I will not die alone,  
Lest their shrill happy laughter come to  
me  
Walking the cold and starless road of  
death  
Uncomforted, leaving my ancient love  
With the Greek woman. I will rise and  
go

Down into Troy, and ere the stars come  
 forth  
 Talk with the wild Cassandra, for she  
 says  
 A fire dances before her, and a sound  
 Rings ever in her ears of armed men.  
 What this may be I know not, but I know  
 That wheresoe'er I am by night and day,  
 All earth and air seem only burning fire."  
 1832, 1842.

## THE SISTERS

WE were two daughters of one race;  
 She was the fairest in the face.  
 The wind is blowing in turret and tree.  
 They were together, and she fell;  
 Therefore revenge became me well.  
 O, the earl was fair to see!

She died; she went to burning flame;  
 She mix'd her ancient blood with shame.  
 The wind is howling in turret and tree.  
 Whole weeks and months, and early and  
 late,  
 To win his love I lay in wait!  
 O, the earl was fair to see!

I made a feast; I bade him come;  
 I won his love, I brought him home.  
 The wind is roaring in turret and tree.  
 And after supper, on a bed,  
 Upon my lap he laid his head.  
 O, the earl was fair to see!

I kiss'd his eyelids into rest.  
 His ruddy cheek upon my breast.  
 The wind is raging in turret and tree.  
 I hated him with the hate of hell,  
 But I loved his beauty passing well.  
 O, the earl was fair to see!

I rose up in the silent night;  
 I made my dagger sharp and bright.  
 The wind is raving in turret and tree.  
 As half-asleep his breath he drew,  
 Three times I stabb'd him thro' and thro'.  
 O, the earl was fair to see!

I curl'd and comb'd his comely head,  
 He look'd so grand when he was dead.  
 The wind is blowing in turret and tree.  
 I wrapped his body in the sheet,  
 And laid him at his mother's feet.  
 O, the earl was fair to see!

1832.

THE PALACE OF ART<sup>1</sup>

I BUILT my soul a lordly pleasure-house,  
 Wherein at ease for aye to dwell.  
 I said, "O Soul, make merry and carouse,  
 Dear soul, for all is well."

A huge crag-platform, smooth as burn-  
 ish'd brass,  
 I chose. The ranged ramparts bright  
 From level meadow-bases of deep grass  
 Suddenly scaled the light.

Thereon I built it firm. Of ledge or shelf  
 The rock rose clear, or winding stair.  
 My soul would live alone unto herself  
 In her high palace there.

And "while the world runs round and  
 round," I said,  
 "Reign thou apart, a quiet king,  
 Still as, while Saturn whirls, his steadfast  
 shade  
 Sleeps on his luminous ring."

To which my soul made answer readily:  
 "Trust me, in bliss I shall abide  
 In this great mansion, that is built for me.  
 So royal-rich and wide."

Four courts I made, East, West and South  
 and North,  
 In each a squared lawn, wherefrom  
 The golden gorge of dragons spouted  
 forth  
 A flood of fountain-foam.

And round the cool green courts there  
 ran a row  
 Of cloisters, branch'd like mighty woods,  
 Echoing all night to that sonorous flow  
 Of spouted fountain-floods;

And round the roofs a gilded gallery  
 That lent broad verge to distant lands.  
 Far as the wild swan wings, to where the  
 sky  
 Dipped down to sea and sands.

From those four jets four currents in one  
 swell  
 Across the mountain stream'd below  
 In misty folds, that floating as they fell  
 Lit up a torrent-bow.

<sup>1</sup> See the *Life of Tennyson*, I, 118-121.

And high on every peak a statue seem'd  
To hang on tiptoe, tossing up  
A cloud of incense of all odor steam'd  
From out a golden cup.

So that she thought, "And who shall gaze  
upon  
My palace with unblinded eyes,  
While this great bow will waver in the sun,  
And that sweet incense rise?"

For that sweet incense rose and never  
fail'd,  
And, while day sank or mounted higher,  
The light ærial gallery, golden-rail'd,  
Burnt like a fringe of fire.

Likewise the deep-set windows, stain'd  
and traced,  
Would seem slow-flaming crimson fires  
From shadow'd grots of arches inter-  
laced,  
And tipped with frost-like spires.

Full of long-sounding corridors it was,  
That over-vaulted grateful gloom,  
Thro' which the livelong day my soul did  
pass,  
Well-pleased, from room to room.

Full of great rooms and small the palace  
stood,  
All various, each a perfect whole  
From living Nature, fit for every mood  
And change of my still soul.

For some were hung with arras green  
and blue,  
Showing a gaudy summer-morn,  
Where with puff'd cheek the belted hunter  
blew  
His wreathed bugle-horn.

One seem'd all dark and red — a tract of  
sand,  
And some one pacing there alone,  
Who paced for ever in a glimmering land,  
Lit with a low large moon.

One show'd an iron coast and angry  
waves,  
You seem'd to hear them climb and fall  
And roar rock-thwarted under bellowing  
caves,  
Beneath the windy wall.

And one, a full-fed river winding slow  
By herds upon an endless plain,  
The ragged rims of thunder brooding low,  
With shadow-streaks of rain.

And one, the reapers at their sultry toil.  
In front they bound the sheaves. Be-  
hind  
Were realms of upland, prodigal in oil.  
And hoary to the wind.

And one a foreground black with stones  
and slags;  
Beyond, a line of heights; and higher  
All barr'd with long white cloud the  
scornful crags;  
And highest, snow and fire.

And one, an English home — gray twi-  
light pour'd  
On dewy pastures, dewy trees,  
Softer than sleep — all things in order  
stored,  
A haunt of ancient Peace.

Nor these alone, but every landscape fair  
As fit for every mood of mind,  
Or gay, or grave, or sweet, or stern, was  
there  
Not less than truth design'd.

Or the maid-mother by a crucifix,  
In tracts of pasture sunny-warm,  
Beneath branch-work of costly sardonix  
Sat smiling, babe in arm.

Or in a clear-wall'd city on the sea,  
Near gilded organ-pipes, her hair  
Wound with white roses, slept Saint  
Cecily;  
An angel look'd at her.

Or thronging all one porch of Paradise  
A group of Houris bow'd to see  
The dying Islamite, with hands and eyes  
That said, We wait for thee.

Or mythic Uther's deeply-wounded son  
In some fair space of sloping greens  
Lay, dozing in the vale of Avalon,  
And watch'd by weeping queens.

Or hollowing one hand against his ear,  
To list a foot-fall, ere he saw  
The wood-nymph, stay'd the Ausonian  
king to hear  
Of wisdom and of law.

Or over hills with peaky tops engrail'd,  
 And many a tract of palm and rice,  
 The throne of Indian Cama slowly sail'd  
 A summer fann'd with spice.

Or sweet Europa's mantle blew un-  
 clasp'd,  
 From off her shoulder backward borne;  
 From one hand droop'd a crocus; one  
 hand grasp'd  
 The mild bull's golden horn.

Or else flush'd Ganymede, his rosy thigh  
 Half-buried in the eagle's down,  
 Sole as a flying star shot thro' the sky  
 Above the pillar'd town.

Nor these alone; but every legend fair  
 Which the supreme Caucasian mind  
 Carved out of Nature for itself, was there,  
 Not less than life, design'd.

Then in the towers I placed great bells  
 that swung,  
 Moved of themselves, with silver  
 sounds;  
 And with choice paintings of wise men  
 I hung  
 The royal dais round.

For there was Milton like a seraph strong,  
 Beside him Shakespeare bland and  
 mild;  
 And there the world-worn Dante grasp'd  
 his song,  
 And somewhat grimly smiled.

And there the Ionian father of the rest;  
 A million wrinkles carved his skin;  
 A hundred winters snow'd upon his  
 breast,  
 From cheek and throat and chin.

Above, the fair hall-ceiling stately-set  
 Many an arch high did lift,  
 And angels rising and descending met  
 With interchange of gift.

Below was all mosaic choicely plann'd  
 With cycles of the human tale  
 Of this wide world, the times of every  
 land  
 So wrought they will not fail.

The people here, a beast of burden slow,  
 Toil'd onward, prick'd with goads and  
 stings;  
 Here play'd, a tiger, rolling to and fro  
 The heads and crowns of kings;

Here rose, an athlete, strong to break or  
 bind  
 All force in bonds that might endure  
 And here once more like some sick man  
 declined,  
 And trusted any cure.

But over these she trod; and those great  
 bells  
 Began to chime. She took her throne;  
 She sat betwixt the shining oriels,  
 To sing her songs alone.

And thro' the topmost oriels' colored flame  
 Two godlike faces gazed below;  
 Plato the wise, and large-brow'd Verulam,  
 The first of those who know.

And all those names that in their motion  
 were  
 Full-welling fountain-heads of change,  
 Betwixt the slender shafts were blazon'd  
 fair  
 In diverse raiment strange;

Thro' which the lights, rose, amber, em-  
 erald, blue,  
 Flush'd in her temples and her eyes,  
 And from her lips, as morn from Mem-  
 non, drew  
 Rivers of melodies.

No nightingale delighteth to prolong  
 Her low preamble all alone,  
 More than my soul to hear her echo'd  
 song  
 Throb thro' the ribbed stone;

Singing and murmuring in her feastful  
 mirth,  
 Joying to feel herself alive,  
 Lord over Nature, lord of the visible earth,  
 Lord of the senses five;

Communing with herself: "All these are  
 mine,  
 And let the world have peace or wars,  
 'Tis one to me." She—when young  
 night divine  
 Crown'd dying day with stars,

Making sweet close of his delicious toils —  
 Lit light in wreaths and anadems,  
 And pure quintessences of precious oils  
 In hollow'd moons of gems,

To mimic heaven; and clapped her hands  
 and cried,  
 "I marvel if my still delight  
 In this great house so royal-rich and  
 wide  
 Be flatter'd to the height.

"O all things fair to sate my various eyes!  
 O shapes and hues that please me well!  
 O silent faces of the Great and Wise,  
 My Gods, with whom I dwell!

"O Godlike isolation which art mine,  
 I can but count thee perfect gain,  
 What time I watch the darkening droves  
 of swine  
 That range on yonder plain.

"In filthy sloughs they roll a prurient  
 skin,  
 They graze and wallow, breed and  
 sleep;  
 And oft some brainless devil enters in,  
 And drives them to the deep."

Then of the moral instinct would she  
 prate  
 And of the rising from the dead,  
 As hers by right of full-accomplish'd  
 Fate;  
 And at the last she said:

"I take possession of man's mind and  
 deed.  
 I care not what the sects may brawl.  
 I sit as God holding no form of creed,  
 But contemplating all."

Full oft the riddle of the painful earth  
 Flash'd thro' her as she sat alone,  
 Yet not the less held she her solemn  
 mirth,  
 And intellectual throne.

And so she throve and prosper'd; so  
 three years  
 She prosper'd; on the fourth she fell,  
 Like Herod, when the shout was in his  
 ears,  
 Struck thro' with pangs of hell.

Lest she should fail and perish utterly,  
 God, before whom ever lie bare  
 The abysmal deeps of personality,  
 Plagued her with sore despair.

When she would think, where'er she  
 turn'd her sight  
 The airy hand confusion wrought,  
 Wrote, "Mene, mene," and divided quite  
 The kingdom of her thought.

Deep dread and loathing of her solitude  
 Fell on her, from which mood was  
 born  
 Scorn of herself; again, from out that  
 mood  
 Laughter at her self-scorn.

"What! is not this my place of strength,"  
 she said,  
 "My spacious mansion built for me,  
 Whereof the strong foundation-stones  
 were laid  
 Since my first memory?"

But in dark corners of her palace stood  
 Uncertain shapes; and unawares  
 On white-eyed phantasms weeping tears  
 of blood,  
 And horrible nightmares,

And hollow shades enclosing hearts of  
 flame,  
 And, with dim fretted foreheads all,  
 On corpses three-months-old at noon she  
 came,  
 That stood against the wall.

A spot of dull stagnation, without light  
 Or power of movement, seem'd my  
 soul,  
 Mid onward-sloping motions infinite  
 Making for one sure goal;

A still salt pool, lock'd in with bars of  
 sand,  
 Left on the shore, that hears all night  
 The plunging seas draw backward from  
 the land  
 Their moon led waters white;

A star that with the choral starry dance  
 Join'd not, but stood, and standing  
 saw  
 The hollow orb of moving Circumstance  
 Roll'd round by one fix'd law.



Back on herself her serpent pride had  
curl'd.

"No voice," she shriek'd in that lone  
hall,  
"No voice breaks thro' the stillness of  
this world;  
One deep, deep silence all!"

She, mouldering with the dull earth's  
mouldering sod,  
Inwapt tenfold in slothful shame,  
Lay there exiled from eternal God,  
Lost to her place and name;

And death and life she hated equally,  
And nothing saw, for her despair,  
But dreadful time, dreadful eternity,  
No comfort anywhere;

Remaining utterly confused with fears,  
And ever worse with growing time,  
And ever unrelieved by dismal tears,  
And all alone in crime.

Shut up as in a crumbling tomb, girt round  
With blackness as a solid wall,  
Far off she seem'd to hear the dully sound  
Of human footsteps fall;

As in strange lands a traveller walking  
slow,  
In doubt and great perplexity,  
A little before moonrise hears the low  
Moan of an unknown sea;

And knows not if it be thunder, or a sound  
Of rocks thrown down, or one deep cry  
Of great wild beasts; then thinketh, "I  
have found  
A new land, but I die."

She howl'd aloud, "I am on fire within.  
There comes no murmur of reply.  
What is it that will take away my sin,  
And save me lest I die?"

So when four years were wholly finished,  
She threw her royal robes away.  
"Make me a cottage in the vale," she said,  
"Where I may mourn and pray.

"Yet pull not down my palace towers,  
that are  
So lightly, beautifully built;  
Perchance I may return with others there  
When I have purged my guilt."

## THE LOTOS-EATERS

"COURAGE!" he said, and pointed to-  
ward the land,

"This mounting wave will roll us shore-  
ward soon."

In the afternoon they came unto a land  
In which it seemed always afternoon.

All round the coast the languid air did  
swoon,

Breathing like one that hath a weary  
dream.

Full-faced above the valley stood the  
moon;

And, like a downward smoke, the slender  
stream

Along the cliff to fall and pause and fall  
did seem.

A land of streams! some, like a down-  
ward smoke,

Slow-dropping veils of thinnest lawn, did  
go;

And some tho' wavering lights and  
shadows broke,

Rolling a slumbrous sheet of foam below.  
They saw the gleaming river seaward flow

From the inner land; far off, three moun-  
tain-tops,

Three silent pinnacles of aged snow,  
Stood sunset-flush'd; and, dew'd with

showery drops,  
Up-clomb the shadowy pine above the

woven copse.

The charmed sunset linger'd low adown  
In the red West; thro' mountain clefts  
the dale

Was seen far inland, and the yellow down  
Border'd with palm, and many a winding  
vale

And meadow, set with slender galin-gale;  
A land where all things always seem'd  
the same!

And round about the keel with faces pale,  
Dark faces pale against that rosy flame,  
The mild-eyed melancholy Lotos-eaters  
came.

Branches they bore of that enchanted  
stem,

Laden with flower and fruit, whereof  
they gave

To each, but whoso did receive of them  
And taste, to him the gushing of the  
wave

Far far away did seem to mourn and  
 rave  
 On alien shores; and if his fellow spake,  
 His voice was thin, as voices from the  
 grave;  
 And deep-asleep he seem'd, yet all awake,  
 And music in his ears his beating heart  
 did make.

They sat them down upon the yellow  
 sand,  
 Between the sun and moon upon the  
 shore;  
 And sweet it was to dream of Fatherland,  
 Of child, and wife and slave; but ever-  
 more  
 Most weary seem'd the sea, weary the oar,  
 Weary the wandering fields of barren  
 foam.  
 Then some one said, "We will return no  
 more;"  
 And all at once they sang, "Our island  
 home  
 Is far beyond the wave; we will no longer  
 roam."

## CHORIC SONG

## I

THERE is sweet music here that softer  
 falls  
 Than petals from blown roses on the  
 grass,  
 Or night-dews on still waters between  
 walls  
 Of shadowy granite, in a gleaming pass;  
 Music that gentlier on the spirit lies,  
 Than tired eyelids upon tired eyes;  
 Music that brings sweet sleep down from  
 the blissful skies.  
 Here are cool mosses deep,  
 And thro' the moss the ivies creep,  
 And in the stream the long-leaved flowers  
 weep,  
 And from the craggy ledge the poppy  
 hangs in sleep.

## II

Why are we weigh'd upon with heaviness,  
 And utterly consumed with sharp dis-  
 tress,  
 While all things else have rest from wear-  
 i-ness?  
 All things have rest: why should we toil  
 alone,

We only toil, who are the first of things,  
 And make perpetual moan,  
 Still from one sorrow to another thrown;  
 Nor ever fold our wings,  
 And cease from wanderings,  
 Nor steep our brows in slumber's holy  
 balm;  
 Nor harken what the inner spirit sings,  
 "There is no joy but calm!" —  
 Why should we only toil, the roof and  
 crown of things?

## III

Lo! in the middle of the wood,  
 The folded leaf is woo'd from out the bud  
 With winds upon the branch, and there  
 Grows green and broad, and takes no care,  
 Sun-steep'd at noon, and in the moon  
 Nightly dew-fed; and turning yellow  
 Falls, and floats adown the air.  
 Lo! sweeten'd with the summer light,  
 The full-juiced apple, waxing over-  
 mellow,  
 Drops in a silent autumn night.  
 All its allotted length of days  
 The flower ripens in its place,  
 Ripens and fades, and falls, and hath no  
 toil,  
 Fast-rooted in the fruitful soil.

## IV

Hateful is the dark-blue sky,  
 Vaulted o'er the dark-blue sea.  
 Death is the end of life; ah, why  
 Should life all labor be?  
 Let us alone. Time driveth onward fast,  
 And in a little while our lips are dumb.  
 Let us alone. What is it that will last?  
 All things are taken from us, and become  
 Portions and parcels of the dreadful past.  
 Let us alone. What pleasure can we have  
 To war with evil? Is there any peace  
 In ever climbing up the climbing wave?  
 All things have rest, and ripen toward  
 the grave  
 In silence — ripen, fall, and cease:  
 Give us long rest or death, dark death, or  
 dreamful ease.

## V

How sweet it were, hearing the downward  
 stream,  
 With half-shut eyes ever to seem  
 Falling asleep in a half-dream!

To dream and dream, like yonder amber  
light,  
Which will not leave the myrrh-bush on  
the height;  
To hear each other's whisper'd speech;  
Eating the Lotos day by day,  
To watch the crisping ripples on the  
beach,  
And tender curving lines of creamy spray;  
To lend our hearts and spirits wholly  
To the influence of mild-minded melan-  
choly;  
To muse and brood and live again in  
memory,  
With those old faces of our infancy  
Heap'd over with a mound of grass,  
Two handfuls of white dust, shut in an  
urn of brass!

## VI

Dear is the memory of our wedded lives,  
And dear the last embraces of our wives  
And their warm tears; but all hath  
suffer'd change;  
For surely now our household hearths  
are cold,  
Our sons inherit us, our looks are strange,  
And we should come like ghosts to trouble  
joy.  
Or else the island princes over-bold  
Have eat our substance, and the minstrel  
sings  
Before them of the ten years' war in  
Troy,  
And our great deeds, as half-forgotten  
things.  
Is there confusion in the little isle?  
Let what is broken so remain.  
The Gods are hard to reconcile;  
'Tis hard to settle order once again.  
There *is* confusion worse than death,  
Trouble on trouble, pain on pain,  
Long labor unto aged breath,  
Sore task to hearts worn out by many  
wars  
And eyes grown dim with gazing on the  
pilot-stars.

## VII

But, propped on beds of amaranth and  
moly,  
How sweet — while warm airs lull us,  
blowing lowly —  
With half-dropped eyelid still,  
Beneath a heaven dark and holy,

To watch the long bright river drawing  
slowly  
His waters from the purple hill —  
To hear the dewy echoes calling  
From cave to cave thro' the thick-twined  
vine —  
To watch the emerald-color'd water fall-  
ing  
Thro' many a woven acanthus-wreath  
divine!  
Only to hear and see the far-off sparkling  
brine,  
Only to hear were sweet, stretch'd out  
beneath the pine.

## VIII

The Lotos blooms below the barren peak,  
The Lotos blows by every winding creek;  
All day the wind breathes low with mel-  
lower tone;  
Thro' every hollow cave and alley lone  
Round and round the spicy downs the  
yellow Lotos-dust is blown.  
We have had enough of action, and of  
motion we,  
Roll'd to starboard, roll'd to larboard,  
when the surge was seething free,  
Where the wallowing monster spouted his  
foam-fountains in the sea.  
Let us swear an oath, and keep it with an  
equal mind,  
In the hollow Lotos-land to live and lie  
reclined  
On the hills like Gods together, careless  
of mankind.  
For they lie beside their nectar, and the  
bolts are hurl'd  
Far below them in the valleys, and the  
clouds are lightly curl'd  
Round their golden houses, girdled with  
the gleaming world;  
Where they smile in secret, looking over  
wasted lands,  
Blight and famine, plague and earth-  
quake, roaring deeps and fiery  
sands,  
Clanging fights, and flaming towns, and  
sinking ships, and praying hands.  
But they smile, they find a music centred  
in a doleful song  
Steaming up, a lamentation and an  
ancient tale of wrong,  
Like a tale of little meaning tho' the  
words are strong;  
Chanted from an ill-used race of men  
that cleave the soil,

Sow the seed, and reap the harvest with  
 enduring toil,  
 Storing yearly little dues of wheat, and  
 wine and oil;  
 Till they perish and they suffer — some,  
 'tis whisper'd — down in hell  
 Suffer endless anguish, others in Elysian  
 valleys dwell.  
 Resting weary limbs at last on beds of  
 asphodel.  
 Surely, surely, slumber is more sweet  
 than toil, the shore  
 Than labor in the deep mid-ocean, wind  
 and wave and oar;  
 O, rest ye, brother mariners, we will not  
 wander more. 1832, 1842.

### A DREAM OF FAIR WOMEN

I READ, before my eyelids dropped their  
 shade,  
 "*The Legend of Good Women*," long  
 ago  
 Sung by the morning star of song, who  
 made  
 His music heard below;

Dan Chaucer, the first warbler, whose  
 sweet breath  
 Preluded those melodious bursts that  
 fill  
 The spacious times of great Elizabeth  
 With sounds that echo still.

And, for a while, the knowledge of his  
 art  
 Held me above the subject, as strong  
 gales  
 Hold swollen clouds from raining, tho'  
 my heart,  
 Brimful of those wild tales,

Charged both mine eyes with tears. In  
 every land  
 I saw, wherever light illumineth,  
 Beauty and anguish walking hand in  
 hand  
 The downward slope to death.

Those far-renowned brides of ancient song  
 Peopled the hollow dark, like burning  
 stars,  
 And I heard sounds of insult, shame, and  
 wrong,  
 And trumpets blown for wars;

And clattering flints batter'd with clang-  
 ing hoofs;  
 And I saw crowds in column'd sanctu-  
 aries,  
 And forms that pass'd at windows and  
 on roofs  
 Of marble palaces;

Corpses across the threshold, heroes tall  
 Dislodging pinnacle and parapet  
 Upon the tortoise creeping to the wall,  
 Lances in ambush set;

And high shrine-doors burst thro' with  
 heated blasts  
 That run before the fluttering tongues  
 of fire;  
 White surf wind-scatter'd over sails and  
 masts,  
 And ever climbing higher;

Squadrons and squares of men in brazen  
 plates,  
 Scaffolds, still sheets of water, divers  
 woes,  
 Ranges of glimmering vaults with iron  
 grates,  
 And hush'd seraglios.

So shape chased shape as swift as, when  
 to land  
 Bluster the winds and tides the self-  
 same way,  
 Crisp foam-flakes scud along the level  
 sand,  
 Torn from the fringe of spray.

I started once, or seem'd to start in pain,  
 Resolved on noble things, and strove  
 to speak,  
 As when a great thought strikes along  
 the brain  
 And flushes all the cheek.

And once my arm was lifted to hew down  
 A cavalier from off his saddle-bow,  
 That bore a lady from a leaguer'd town;  
 And then, I know not how,

All those sharp fancies, by down-lapsing  
 thought  
 Stream'd onward, lost their edges, and  
 did creep  
 Roll'd on each other, rounded, smooth'd,  
 and brought  
 Into the gulfs of sleep.

At last methought that I had wander'd far  
 In an old wood; fresh-wash'd in coolest  
 dew  
 The maiden splendors of the morning star  
 Shook in the steadfast blue.

Enormous elm-tree boles did stoop and  
 lean  
 Upon the dusky brushwood under-  
 neath  
 Their broad curved branches, fledged  
 with clearest green,  
 New from its silken sheath.

The dim red Morn had died, her journey  
 done,  
 And with dead lips smiled at the twi-  
 light plain,  
 Half-fallen across the threshold of the  
 sun,  
 Never to rise again.

There was no motion in the dumb dead  
 air,  
 Not any song of bird or sound of rill;  
 Gross darkness of the inner sepulchre  
 Is not so deadly still

As that wide forest. Growths of jasmine  
 turn'd  
 Their humid arms festooning tree to  
 tree,  
 And at the root thro' lush green grasses  
 burn'd  
 The red anemone.

I knew the flowers, I knew the leaves, I  
 knew  
 The tearful glimmer of the languid  
 dawn  
 On those long, rank, dark wood-walks  
 drench'd in dew,  
 Leading from lawn to lawn.

The smell of violets, hidden in the green,  
 Pour'd back into my empty soul and  
 frame  
 The times when I remember to have been  
 Joyful and free from blame.

And from within me a clear undertone  
 Thrill'd thro' mine ears in that unbliss-  
 ful clime,  
 "Pass freely thro'; the wood is all thine  
 own  
 Until the end of time."

At length I saw a lady within call,  
 Still than chisell'd marble, standing  
 there;  
 A daughter of the gods, divinely tall,  
 And most divinely fair.

Her loveliness with shame and with  
 surprise  
 Froze my swift speech; she turning  
 on my face  
 The star-like sorrows of immortal eyes,  
 Spoke slowly in her place:

"I had great beauty; ask thou not my  
 name:  
 No one can be more wise than des-  
 tiny.  
 Many drew swords and died. Where'er  
 I came  
 I brought calamity."

"No marvel, sovereign lady: in fair field  
 Myself for such a face had boldly died,"  
 I answer'd free; and turning I appeal'd  
 To one that stood beside.

But she, with sick and scornful looks  
 averse,  
 To her full height her stately stature  
 draws;  
 "My youth," she said, "was blasted  
 with a curse:  
 This woman was the cause.

"I was cut off from hope in that sad  
 place  
 Which men call'd Aulis in those iron  
 years:  
 My father held his hand upon his face;  
 I, blinded with my tears,

"Still strove to speak: my voice was  
 thick with sighs  
 As in a dream. Dimly I could descry  
 The stern black-bearded kings with  
 wolfish eyes,  
 Waiting to see me die.

"The high masts flicker'd as they lay  
 afloat;  
 The crowds, the temples, waver'd, and  
 the shore;  
 The bright death quiver'd at the victim's  
 throat —  
 Touch'd — and I knew no more."



Whereto the other with a downward  
brow :

"I would the white cold heavy-plung-  
ing foam,  
Whirled by the wind, had roll'd me deep  
below,  
Then when I left my home."

Her slow full words sank thro' the silence  
drear,  
As thunder-drops fall on a sleeping sea :  
Sudden I heard a voice that cried "Come  
here,  
That I may look on thee."

I turning saw, throned on a flowery rise,  
One sitting on a crimson scarf unroll'd ;  
A queen, with swarthy cheeks and bold  
black eyes,  
Brow-bound with burning gold.

She, flashing forth a haughty smile, be-  
gan :

"I govern'd men by change, and so I  
sway'd  
All moods. 'Tis long since I have seen a  
man.  
Once, like the moon, I made

"The ever-shifting currents of the blood  
According to my humor ebb and flow.  
I have no men to govern in this wood ;  
That makes my only woe.

"Nay—yet it chafes me that I could  
not bend  
One will ; nor tame and tutor with  
mine eye  
That dull cold-blooded Cæsar. Prythee,  
friend,  
Where is Mark Antony?

"The man, my lover, with whom I rode  
sublime  
On Fortune's neck ; we sat as God by  
God :  
The Nilus would have risen before his  
time  
And flooded at our nod.

"We drank the Libyan Sun to sleep, and  
lit  
Lamps which out-burn'd Canopus. O,  
my life  
In Egypt ! O, the dalliance and the wit,  
The flattery and the strife,

"And the wild kiss, when fresh from  
war's alarms,  
My Hercules, my Roman Antony,  
My mailed Bacchus leaped into my arms,  
Contented there to die !

"And there he died : and when I heard  
my name  
Sigh'd forth with life, I would not  
brook my fear  
Of the other ; with a worm I balk'd his  
fame.  
What else was left ? look here !"—

With that she tore her robe apart, and half  
The polish'd argent of her breast to sight  
Laid bare. Thereto she pointed with a  
laugh,  
Showing the aspic's bite. —

"I died a Queen. The Roman soldier  
found  
Me lying dead, my crown about my  
brows,  
A name for ever !—lying robed and  
crown'd  
Worthy a Roman spouse."

Her warbling voice, a lyre of widest range  
Struck by all passion, did fall down  
and glance  
From tone to tone, and glided thro' all  
change  
Of liveliest utterance.

When she made pause I knew not for  
delight ;  
Because with sudden motion from the  
ground  
She raised her piercing orbs, and fill'd  
with light  
The interval of sound.

Still with their fires Love tipt his keenest  
darts ;  
As once they drew into two burning  
rings  
All beams of Love, melting the mighty  
hearts  
Of captains and of kings.

Slowly my sense undazzled. Then I heard  
A noise of some one coming thro' the  
lawn,  
And singing clearer than the crested bird  
That claps his wings at dawn :

"The torrent brooks of hallow'd Israel  
 From craggy hollows pouring, late and  
 soon,  
 Sound all night long, in falling thro' the  
 dell,  
 Far-heard beneath the moon.

"The balmy moon of blessed Israel  
 Floods all the deep-blue gloom with  
 beams divine;  
 All night the splinter'd crags that wall  
 the dell  
 With spires of silver shine."

As one that museth where broad sun-  
 shine laves  
 The lawn by some cathedral, thro' the  
 door  
 Hearing the holy organ rolling waves  
 Of sound on roof and floor

Within, and anthem sung, is charm'd  
 and tied  
 To where he stands, — so stood I, when  
 that flow  
 Of music left the lips of her that died  
 To save her father's vow;

The daughter of the warrior Gileadite,  
 A maiden pure; as when she went along  
 From Mizpah's tower'd gate with wel-  
 come light.  
 With timbrel and with song.

My words leaped forth: "Heaven heads  
 the count of crimes  
 With that wild oath." She render'd  
 answer high:  
 "Not so, nor once alone; a thousand times  
 I would be born and die.

"Single I grew, like some green plant,  
 whose root  
 Creeps to the garden water-pipes be-  
 neath,  
 Feeding the flower; but ere my flower to  
 fruit  
 Changed, I was ripe for death.

"My God, my land, my father — these  
 did move  
 Me from my bliss of life that Nature  
 gave,  
 Lower'd softly with a threefold cord of  
 love  
 Down to a silent grave.

"And I went mourning, 'No fair Hebrew  
 boy  
 Shall smile away my maiden blame  
 among  
 The Hebrew mothers' — emptied of all  
 joy,  
 Leaving the dance and song,

"Leaving the olive-gardens far below,  
 Leaving the promise of my bridal  
 bower,  
 The valleys of grape-loaded vines that  
 glow  
 Beneath the battled tower.

"The light white cloud swam over us.  
 Anon  
 We heard the lion roaring from his  
 den;  
 We saw the large white stars rise one  
 by one,  
 Or, from the darken'd glen,

"Saw God divide the night with flying  
 flame.  
 And thunder on the everlasting hills.  
 I heard Him, for He spake, and grief be-  
 came  
 A solemn scorn of ills.

"When the next moon was roll'd into  
 the sky,  
 Strength came to me that equall'd my  
 desire.  
 How beautiful a thing it was to die  
 For God and for my sire!

"It comforts me in this one thought to  
 dwell,  
 That I subdued me to my father's will;  
 Because the kiss he gave me, ere I fell,  
 Sweetens the spirit still.

"Moreover it is written that my race  
 Hew'd Ammon, hip and thigh, from  
 Aroer  
 On Arnon unto Minneth." Here her face  
 Glow'd, as I look'd at her.

She lock'd her lips; she left me where  
 I stood:  
 "Glory to God," she sang, and past  
 afar,  
 Thridding the sombre boskage of the  
 wood,  
 Toward the morning-star.

Losing her carol I stood pensively,  
 As one that from a casement leans his  
 head,  
 When midnight bells cease ringing sud-  
 denly,  
 And the old year is dead.

"Alas! alas!" a low voice, full of care,  
 Murmur'd beside me: "Turn and look  
 on me;  
 I am that Rosamond, whom men call fair,  
 If what I was I be.

"Would I had been some maiden coarse  
 and poor!  
 O me, that I should ever see the light!  
 Those dragon eyes of anger'd Eleanor  
 Do hunt me, day and night."

She ceased in tears, fallen from hope and  
 trust;  
 To whom the Egyptian: "O, you  
 tamely died!  
 You should have clung to Fulvia's waist,  
 and thrust  
 The dagger thro' her side."

With that sharp sound the white dawn's  
 creeping beams,  
 Stolen to my brain, dissolved the mys-  
 tery  
 Of folded sleep. The captain of my  
 dreams  
 Ruled in the eastern sky.

Morn broaden'd on the borders of the dark  
 Ere I saw her who clasp'd in her last  
 trance  
 Her murder'd father's head, or Joan of  
 Arc,  
 A light of ancient France;

Or her who knew that Love can vanquish  
 Death,  
 Who kneeling, with one arm about her  
 king,  
 Drew forth the poison with her balmy  
 breath,  
 Sweet as new buds in spring.

No memory labors longer from the deep  
 Gold-mines of thought to lift the  
 hidden ore  
 That glimpses, moving up, than I from  
 sleep  
 To gather and tell o'er

Each little sound and sight. With what  
 dull pain  
 Compass'd, how eagerly I sought to  
 strike  
 Into that wondrous track of dreams  
 again!  
 But no two dreams are like.

As when a soul laments, which hath been  
 blest,  
 Desiring what is mingled with past  
 years,  
 In yearnings that can never be expressed  
 By signs or groans or tears;

Because all words, tho' cull'd with  
 choicest art,  
 Failing to give the bitter of the sweet,  
 Wither beneath the palate, and the heart  
 Faints, faded by its heat. 1832.

#### LADY CLARA VERE DE VERE

LADY Clara Vere de Vere,  
 Of me you shall not win renown:  
 You thought to break a country heart  
 For pastime, ere you went to town.  
 At me you smiled, but unbeguiled  
 I saw the snare, and I retired;  
 The daughter of a hundred earls,  
 You are not one to be desired.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,  
 I know you proud to bear your name,  
 Your pride is yet no mate for mine,  
 Too proud to care from whence I came.  
 Nor would I break for your sweet sake  
 A heart that dotes on truer charms.  
 A simple maiden in her flower  
 Is worth a hundred coats-of-arms.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,  
 Some meeker pupil you must find,  
 For, were you queen of all that is,  
 I could not stoop to such a mind.  
 You sought to prove how I could love,  
 And my disdain is my reply.  
 The lion on your old stone gates  
 Is not more cold to you than I.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,  
 You put strange memories in my head.  
 Not thrice your branching limes have  
 blown  
 Since I beheld young Laurence dead.

O, your sweet eyes, your low replies !  
 A great enchantress you may be ;  
 But there was that across his throat  
 Which you had hardly cared to see.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,  
 When thus he met his mother's view,  
 She had the passions of her kind,  
 She spake some certain truths of you.  
 Indeed I heard one bitter word  
 That scarce is fit for you to hear ;  
 Her manners had not that repose  
 Which stamps the caste of Vere de Vere.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,  
 There stands a spectre in your hall ;  
 The guilt of blood is at your door ;  
 You changed a wholesome heart to gall.  
 You held your course without remorse,  
 To make him trust his modest worth,  
 And, last, you fix'd a vacant stare,  
 And slew him with your noble birth.

Trust me, Clara Vere de Vere,  
 From yon blue heavens above us bent  
 The gardener Adam and his wife  
 Smile at the claims of long descent.  
 Howe'er it be, it seems to me,  
 'Tis only noble to be good.  
 Kind hearts are more than coronets,  
 And simple faith than Norman blood.

I know you, Clara Vere de Vere,  
 You pine among your halls and towers ;  
 The languid light of your proud eyes  
 Is wearied of the rolling hours.  
 In glowing health, with boundless wealth,  
 But sickening of a vague disease,  
 You know so ill to deal with time,  
 You needs must play such pranks as these.

Clara, Clara Vere de Vere,  
 If time be heavy on your hands,  
 Are there no beggars at your gate,  
 Nor any poor about your lands ?  
 O, teach the orphan-boy to read,  
 Or teach the orphan-girl to sew ;  
 Pray Heaven for a human heart,  
 And let the foolish yeoman go.

1833. 1842.

## THE MAY QUEEN

You must wake and call me early, call me  
 early, mother dear ;  
 To-morrow 'ill be the happiest time of all  
 the glad New-year ;  
 Of all the glad New-year, mother, the  
 maddest merriest day,  
 For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother,  
 I'm to be Queen o' the May.

There's many a black, black eye, they  
 say, but none so bright as mine ;  
 There's Margaret and Mary, there's Kate  
 and Caroline ;  
 But none so fair as little Alice in all the  
 land they say,  
 So I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother,  
 I'm to be Queen o' the May.

I sleep so sound all night, mother, that I  
 shall never wake,  
 If you do not call me loud when the day  
 begins to break ;  
 But I must gather knots of flowers, and  
 buds and garlands gay,  
 For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother,  
 I'm to be Queen o' the May.

As I came up the valley whom think ye  
 should I see  
 But Robin leaning on the bridge beneath  
 the hazel-tree ?  
 He thought of that sharp look, mother, I  
 gave him yesterday,  
 But I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother,  
 I'm to be Queen o' the May.

He thought I was a ghost, mother, for I  
 was all in white,  
 And I ran by him without speaking, like a  
 flash of light.  
 They call me cruel-hearted, but I care not  
 what they say,  
 For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother,  
 I'm to be Queen o' the May.

They say he's dying all for love, but that  
 can never be ;  
 They say his heart is breaking, mother —  
 what is that to me ?  
 There's many a bolder lad 'ill woo me any  
 summer day,  
 And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother,  
 I'm to be Queen o' the May.

Little Effie shall go with me to-morrow to  
the green,  
And you'll be there, too, mother, to see  
me made the Queen;  
For the shepherd lads on every side 'ill  
come from far away,  
And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother,  
I'm to be Queen o' the May.

The honeysuckle round the porch has  
woven its wavy bowers,  
And by the meadow-trenches blow the  
faint sweet cuckoo-flowers;  
And the wild marsh-marigold shines like  
fire in swamps and hollows gray,  
And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother,  
I'm to be Queen o' the May.

The night-winds come and go, mother,  
upon the meadow-grass,  
And the happy stars above them seem to  
brighten as they pass;  
There will not be a drop of rain the whole  
of the livelong day,  
And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother,  
I'm to be Queen o' the May.

All the valley, mother, 'ill be fresh and  
green and still,  
And the cowslip and the crowfoot are  
over all the hill,  
And the rivulet in the flowery dale 'ill  
merrily glance and play,  
For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother,  
I'm to be Queen o' the May.

So you must wake and call me early, call  
me early, mother dear,  
To-morrow 'ill be the happiest time of all  
the glad New-year;  
To-morrow 'ill be of all the year the  
maddest merriest day,  
For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother,  
I'm to be Queen o' the May.

## NEW-YEAR'S EVE

If you're waking call me early, call me  
early, mother dear,  
For I would see the sun rise upon the glad  
New-year.  
It is the last New-year that I shall ever see,  
Then you may lay me low i' the mould  
and think no more of me.

To-night I saw the sun set; he set and left  
behind  
The good old year, the dear old time, and  
all my peace of mind;  
And the New-year's coming up, mother,  
but I shall never see  
The blossom on the blackthorn, the leaf  
upon the tree.

Last May we made a crown of flowers; we  
had a merry day;  
Beneath the hawthorn on the green they  
made me Queen of May;  
And we danced about the may-pole and in  
the hazel copse,  
Till Charles's Wain came out above the  
tall white chimney-tops.

There's not a flower on all the hills; the  
frost is on the pane.  
I only wish to live till the snowdrops come  
again;  
I wish the snow would melt and the sun  
come out on high;  
I long to see a flower so before the day I  
die.

The building rook 'ill caw from the windy  
tall elm-tree,  
And the tufted plover pipe along the  
fallow lea,  
And the swallow 'ill come back again with  
summer o'er the wave,  
But I shall lie alone, mother, within the  
mouldering grave.

Upon the chancel-casement, and upon  
that grave of mine,  
In the early early morning the summer  
sun 'ill shine,  
Before the red cock crows from the farm  
upon the hill,  
When you are warm-asleep, mother, and  
all the world is still.

When the flowers come again, mother, be-  
neath the waning light  
You'll never see me more in the long gray  
fields at night;  
When from the dry dark wold the summer  
airs blow cool  
On the oat-grass and the sword-grass, and  
the bulrush in the pool.



You'll bury me, my mother, just beneath  
 the hawthorn shade,  
 And you'll come sometimes and see me  
 where I am lowly laid.  
 I shall not forget you, mother, I shall hear  
 you when you pass,  
 With your feet above my head in the long  
 and pleasant grass.

I have been wild and wayward, but you'll  
 forgive me now;  
 You'll kiss me, my own mother, and for-  
 give me ere I go;  
 Nay, nay, you must not weep, nor let your  
 grief be wild;  
 You should not fret for me, mother, you  
 have another child.

If I can I'll come again, mother, from out  
 my resting-place;  
 Tho' you'll not see me, mother, I shall  
 look upon your face;  
 Tho' I cannot speak a word, I shall harken  
 what you say,  
 And be often, often with you when you  
 think I'm far away.

Good-night, good-night, when I have  
 said good-night for evermore,  
 And you see me carried out from the  
 threshold of the door  
 Don't let Effie come to see me till my  
 grave be growing green.  
 She'll be a better child to you than ever I  
 have been.

She'll find my garden-tools upon the  
 granary floor.  
 Let her take 'em, they are hers; I shall  
 never garden more;  
 But tell her, when I'm gone, to train the  
 rosebush that I set  
 About the parlor-window and the box of  
 mignonette.

Good-night, sweet mother; call me before  
 the day is born.  
 All night I lie awake, but I fall asleep at  
 morn;  
 But I would see the sun rise upon the glad  
 New-year,  
 So, if you're waking, call me, call me  
 early, mother dear.

## CONCLUSION

I THOUGHT to pass away before, and yet  
 alive I am;  
 And in the fields all round I hear the  
 bleating of the lamb.  
 How sadly, I remember, rose the morning  
 of the year!  
 To die before the snowdrop came, and  
 now the violet's here.

O, sweet is the new violet, that comes be-  
 neath the skies,  
 And sweeter is the young lamb's voice to  
 me that cannot rise,  
 And sweet is all the land about, and all  
 the flowers that blow,  
 And sweeter far is death than life to me  
 that long to go.

It seem'd so hard at first, mother, to  
 leave the blessed sun,  
 And now it seems as hard to stay, and yet  
 His will be done!  
 But still I think it can't be long before I  
 find release;  
 And that good man, the clergyman, has  
 told me words of peace.

O, blessings on his kindly voice and on his  
 silver hair!  
 And blessings on his whole life long, until  
 he meet me there!  
 O, blessings on his kindly heart and on  
 his silver head!  
 A thousand times I blest him, as he knelt  
 beside my bed.

He taught me all the mercy, for he show'd  
 me all the sin.  
 Now, tho' my lamp was lighted late,  
 there's One will let me in;  
 Nor would I now be well, mother, again, if  
 that could be,  
 For my desire is but to pass to Him that  
 died for me.

I did not hear the dog howl, mother, or  
 the death-watch beat,  
 There came a sweeter token when the  
 night and morning meet;  
 But sit beside my bed, mother, and put  
 your hand in mine,  
 And Effie on the other side, and I will tell  
 the sign.

All in the wild March-morning I heard the  
angels call;  
It was when the moon was setting, and the  
dark was over all;  
The trees began to whisper, and the wind  
began to roll,  
And in the wild March-morning I heard  
them call my soul.

For lying broad awake I thought of you  
and Effie dear;  
I saw you sitting in the house, and I no  
longer here;  
With all my strength I pray'd for both,  
and so I felt resign'd,  
And up the valley came a swell of music  
on the wind.

I thought that it was fancy, and I listen'd  
in my bed,  
And then did something speak to me — I  
know not what was said;  
For great delight and shuddering took  
hold of all my mind,  
And up the valley came again the music  
on the wind.

But you were sleeping; and I said, 'It's  
not for them, it's mine.'  
And if it come three times, I thought, I  
take it for a sign.  
And once again it came, and close beside  
the window-bars,  
Then seem'd to go right up to heaven and  
die among the stars.

So now I think my time is near. I trust  
it is. I know  
The blessed music went that way my soul  
will have to go.  
And for myself, indeed, I care not if I go  
to-day;  
But, Effie, you must comfort *her* when I  
am past away.

And say to Robin a kind word, and tell  
him not to fret;  
There's many a worthier than I, would  
make him happy yet.  
If I had lived — I cannot tell — I might  
have been his wife;  
But all these things have ceased to be  
with my desire of life.

O, look! the sun begins to rise, the  
heavens are in a glow;

He shines upon a hundred fields, and all  
of them I know.  
And there I move no longer now, and  
there his light may shine —  
Wild flowers in the valley for other hands  
than mine.

O, sweet and strange it seems to me, that  
ere this day is done  
The voice, that now is speaking, may be  
beyond the sun —  
For ever and for ever with those just  
souls and true —  
And what is life, that we should moan?  
why make we such ado?

For ever and for ever, all in a blessed  
home —  
And there to wait a little while till you  
and Effie come —  
To lie within the light of God, as I lie  
upon your breast —  
And the wicked cease from troubling, and  
the weary are at rest.

1833. 1842.

### THE BLACKBIRD

O BLACKBIRD! sing me something well:  
While all the neighbors shoot thee  
round,  
I keep smooth plats of fruitful ground,  
Where thou mayst warble, eat, and  
dwell.

The espaliers and the standards all  
Are thine; the range of lawn and park;  
The unnetted black-hearts ripen dark,  
All thine, against the garden wall.

Yet, tho' I spared thee all the spring,  
Thy sole delight is, sitting still,  
With that gold dagger of thy bill  
To fret the summer jenneting.

A golden bill! the silver tongue,  
Cold February love, is dry;  
Plenty corrupts the melody  
That made thee famous once when young;

And in the sultry garden-squares,  
Now thy flute-notes are changed to  
coarse,  
I hear thee not at all, or hoarse  
As when a hawker hawks his wares.

Take warning! he that will not sing  
 While yon sun prospers in the blue,  
 Shall sing for want, ere leaves are new,  
 Caught in the frozen palms of Spring.  
 1833. 1842.

### SAINT AGNES' EVE

DEEP on the convent-roof the snows  
 Are sparkling to the moon;  
 My breath to heaven like vapor goes;  
 May my soul follow soon!  
 The shadows of the convent-towers  
 Slant down the snowy sward,  
 Still creeping with the creeping hours  
 That lead me to my Lord.  
 Make Thou my spirit pure and clear  
 As are the frosty skies,  
 Or this first snowdrop of the year  
 That in my bosom lies.

As these white robes are soil'd and dark,  
 To yonder shining ground;  
 As this pale taper's earthly spark,  
 To yonder argent round;  
 So shows my soul before the Lamb,  
 My spirit before Thee;  
 So in mine earthly house I am,  
 To that I hope to be.  
 Break up the heavens, O Lord! and far,  
 Thro' all yon starlight keen,  
 Draw me, thy bride, a glittering star,  
 In raiment white and clean.

He lifts me to the golden doors;  
 The flashes come and go;  
 All heaven bursts her starry floors,  
 And strows her lights below,  
 And deepens on and up! the gates  
 Roll back, and far within  
 For me the Heavenly Bridegroom waits,  
 To make me pure of sin.  
 The Sabbaths of Eternity,  
 One Sabbath deep and wide —  
 A light upon the shining sea —  
 The Bridegroom with his bride!  
 1837.

### YOU ASK ME, WHY, THO' ILL AT EASE

You ask me, why, tho' ill at ease,  
 Within this region I subside,  
 Whose spirits falter in the mist,  
 And languish for the purple seas.

It is the land that freemen till,  
 That sober-suited Freedom chose,  
 The land, where girt with friends or  
 foes  
 A man may speak the thing he will;

A land of settled government,  
 A land of just and old renown,  
 Where Freedom slowly broadens down  
 From precedent to precedent;

Where faction seldom gathers head,  
 But, by degrees to fullness wrought,  
 The strength of some diffusive thought  
 Hath time and space to work and spread.

Should banded unions persecute  
 Opinions, and induce a time  
 When single thought is civil crime,  
 And individual freedom mute,

Tho' power should make from land to land  
 The name of Britain trebly great —  
 Tho' every channel of the State  
 Should fill and choke with golden sand —

Yet waft me from the harbor-mouth,  
 Wild wind! I seek a warmer sky,  
 And I will see before I die  
 The palms and temples of the South.  
 1833. 1842.

### OF OLD SAT FREEDOM ON THE HEIGHTS

OF old sat Freedom on the heights,  
 The thunders breaking at her feet;  
 Above her shook the starry lights;  
 She heard the torrents meet.

There in her place she did rejoice,  
 Self-gather'd in her prophet-mind,  
 But fragments of her mighty voice  
 Came rolling on the wind.

Then stepped she down thro' town and  
 field  
 To mingle with the human race,  
 And part by part to men reveal'd  
 The fulness of her face —

Grave mother of majestic works,  
 From her isle-altar gazing down,  
 Who, Godlike, grasps the triple forks  
 And, king-like, wears the crown.

Her open eyes desire the truth.  
 The wisdom of a thousand years  
 Is in them. May perpetual youth  
 Keep dry their light from tears;

That her fair form may stand and shine,  
 Make bright our days and light our  
 dreams,  
 Turning to scorn with lips divine  
 The falsehood of extremes!

1833. 1842.

### LOVE THOU THY LAND

LOVE thou thy land, with love far-brought  
 From out the storied past, and used  
 Within the present, but transfused  
 Thro' future time by power of thought;

True love turn'd round on fixed poles,  
 Love, that endures not sordid ends,  
 For English natures, freemen, friends,  
 Thy brothers, and immortal souls.

But pamper not a hasty time,  
 Nor feed with crude imaginings  
 The herd, wild hearts and feeble wings  
 That every sophister can lime.

Deliver not the tasks of might  
 To weakness, neither hide the ray  
 From those, not blind, who wait for  
 day,  
 Tho' sitting girt with doubtful light.

Make knowledge circle with the winds;  
 But let her herald, Reverence, fly  
 Before her to whatever sky  
 Bear seed of men and growth of minds.

Watch what main-currents draw the  
 years;  
 Cut Prejudice against the grain.  
 But gentle words are always gain;  
 Regard the weakness of thy peers.

Nor toil for title, place, or touch  
 Of pension, neither count on praise —  
 It grows to guerdon after-days.  
 Nor deal in watch-words overmuch;

Not clinging to some ancient saw,  
 Not master'd by some modern term,  
 Not swift nor slow to change, but firm;  
 And in its season bring the law,

That from Discussion's lip may fall  
 With Life that, working strongly,  
 binds —  
 Set in all lights by many minds,  
 To close the interests of all.

For Nature also, cold and warm,  
 And moist and dry, devising long,  
 Thro' many agents making strong,  
 Matures the individual form.

Meet is it changes should control  
 Our being, lest we rust in ease.  
 We all are changed by still degrees,  
 All but the basis of the soul.

So let the change which comes be free  
 To ingroove itself with that which flies,  
 And work, a joint of state, that plies  
 Its office, moved with sympathy.

A saying hard to shape in act;  
 For all the past of Time reveals  
 A bridal dawn of thunder-peals,  
 Wherever Thought hath wedded Fact.

Even now we hear with inward strife  
 A motion toiling in the gloom —  
 The Spirit of the years to come  
 Yearning to mix himself with Life.

A slow-develop'd strength awaits  
 Completion in a painful school;  
 Phantoms of other forms of rule,  
 New Majesties of mighty States —

The warders of the growing hour,  
 But vague in vapor, hard to mark;  
 And round them sea and air are dark  
 With great contrivances of Power.

Of many changes, aptly join'd,  
 Is bodied forth the second whole.  
 Regard gradation, lest the soul  
 Of Discord race the rising wind;

A wind to puff your idol-fires,  
 And heap their ashes on the head;  
 To shame the boast so often made,  
 That we are wiser than our sires.

O, yet, Nature's evil star  
 Drive men in manhood, as in youth,  
 To follow flying steps of Truth  
 Across the brazen bridge of war —

If New and Old, disastrous feud,  
Must ever shock, like armed foes,  
And this be true, till Time shall close,  
That Principles are rain'd in blood;

Not yet the wise of heart would cease  
To hold his hope thro' shame and guilt,  
But with his hand against the hilt,  
Would pace the troubled land, like  
Peace;

Not less, tho' dogs of Faction bay,  
Would serve his kind in deed and word,  
Certain, if knowledge bring the sword,  
That knowledge takes the sword away —

Would love the gleams of good that broke  
From either side, nor veil his eyes;  
And if some dreadful need should rise  
Would strike, and firmly, and one stroke.

To-morrow yet would reap to-day,  
As we bear blossom of the dead;  
Earn well the thrifty months, nor wed  
Raw Haste, half-sister to Delay.

1833. 1842.

#### MORTE D'ARTHUR

So all day long the noise of battle roll'd  
Among the mountains by the winter sea,  
Until King Arthur's table, man by man,  
Had fallen in Lyonesse about their lord,  
King Arthur; then, because his wound  
was deep,

The bold Sir Bedivere uplifted him,  
Sir Bedivere, the last of all his knights,  
And bore him to a chapel nigh the field,  
A broken chancel with a broken cross,  
That stood on a dark strait of barren land.  
On one side lay the ocean, and on one  
Lay a great water, and the moon was  
full.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere:

"The sequel of to-day unsolders all  
The goodliest fellowship of famous  
knights

Whereof this world holds record. Such a  
sleep

They sleep — the men I loved. I think  
that we

Shall never more, at any future time,  
Delight our souls with talk of knightly  
deeds.

Walking about the gardens and the halls  
Of Camelot, as in the days that were.  
I perish by this people which I made, —  
Tho' Merlin sware that I should come  
again

To rule once more — but let what will be  
be,

I am so deeply smitten thro' the helm  
That without help I cannot last till morn.  
Thou therefore take my brand Excalibur,  
Which was my pride; for thou remem-  
berest how

In those old days, one summer noon, an  
arm

Rose up from out the bosom of the lake,  
Clothed in white samite, mystic, won-  
derful,

Holding the sword — and how I row'd  
across

And took it, and have worn it, like a  
king;

And, wheresoever I am sung or told  
In aftertime, this also shall be known.

But now delay not; take Excalibur,  
And fling him far into the middle mere;  
Watch what thou seest, and lightly bring  
me word."

To him replied the bold Sir Bedivere:  
"It is not meet, Sir King, to leave thee  
thus,

Aidless, alone, and smitten thro' the  
helm.

A little thing may harm a wounded man.  
Yet I thy hest will all perform at full,  
Watch what I see, and lightly bring thee  
word."

So saying, from the ruin'd shrine he  
stept

And in the moon athwart the place of  
tombs,

Where lay the mighty bones of ancient  
men,

Old knights, and over them the sea-wind  
sang

Shrill, chill, with flakes of foam. He,  
stepping down

By zigzag paths and juts of pointed rock,  
Came on the shining levels of the lake.

There drew he forth the brand Excali-  
bur,

And o'er him, drawing it, the winter  
moon,

Brightening the skirts of a long cloud,  
ran forth

And sparkled keen with frost against  
the hilt;



For all the haft twinkled with diamond  
sparks,

Myriads of topaz-lights, and jacinth  
work

Of subtlest jewellery. He gazed so long  
That both his eyes were dazzled, as he  
stood,

This way and that dividing the swift  
mind,

In act to throw; but at the last it seem'd  
Better to leave Excalibur conceal'd

There in the many-knotted water-flags,  
That whistled stiff and dry about the  
marge.

So strode he back slow to the wounded  
king.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedi-  
vere:

"Hast thou perform'd my mission which  
I gave?

What is it thou hast seen, or what hast  
heard?"

And answer made the bold Sir Bedi-  
vere:

"I heard the ripple washing in the reeds,  
And the wild water lapping on the crag."

To whom replied King Arthur, faint  
and pale:

"Thou hast betray'd thy nature and thy  
name,

Not rendering true answer, as beseem'd  
Thy fealty, nor like a noble knight;

For surer sign had follow'd, either hand,  
Or voice, or else a motion of the mere.

This is a shameful thing for men to lie.

Yet now, I charge thee, quickly go again  
As thou art lief and dear, and do the  
thing

I bade thee, watch, and lightly bring me  
word."

Then went Sir Bedivere the second  
time

Across the ridge, and paced beside the  
mere,

Counting the dewy pebbles, fix'd in  
thought;

But when he saw the wonder of the hilt,  
How curiously and strangely chased, he  
smote

His palms together, and he cried aloud:

"And if indeed I cast the brand away,  
Surely a precious thing, one worthy note,  
Should thus be lost forever from the  
earth,

Which might have pleased the eyes of  
many men.

What good should follow this, if this  
were done?

What harm, undone? deep harm to dis-  
obey,

Seeing obedience is the bond of rule.

Were it well to obey then, if a king de-  
mand

An act unprofitable, against himself?

The king is sick, and knows not what he  
does.

What record, or what relic of my lord  
Should be to aftertime, but empty breath

And rumors of a doubt? but were this  
kept,

Stored in some treasure-house of mighty  
kings,

Some one might show it at a joust of  
arms,

Saying, 'King Arthur's sword, Excali-  
bur,

Wrought by the lonely maiden of the  
lake;

Nine years she wrought it, sitting in the  
deeps

Upon the hidden bases of the hills.'

So might some old man speak in the  
aftertime

To all the people, winning reverence;  
But now much honor and much fame were  
lost."

So spake he, clouded with his own con-  
ceit,

And hid Excalibur the second time,  
And so strode back slow to the wounded  
king.

Then spoke King Arthur, breathing  
heavily:

"What is it thou hast seen, or what hast  
heard?"

And answer made the bold Sir Bedi-  
vere:

"I heard the water lapping on the crag,  
And the long ripple washing in the reeds."

To whom replied King Arthur, much  
in wrath:

"Ah, miserable and unkind, untrue,  
Unknightly, traitor-hearted! Woe is me!

Authority forgets a dying king,  
Laid widow'd of the power in his eye

That bow'd the will. I see thee what  
thou art,

For thou, the latest-left of all my knights,  
In whom should meet the offices of all,

Thou wouldst betray me for the precious  
hilt;

Either from lust of gold, or like a girl

Valuing the giddy pleasure of the eyes.  
Yet, for a man may fail in duty twice,  
And the third time may prosper, get thee  
hence;

But, if thou spare to fling Excalibur,  
I will arise and slay thee with my hands."

Then quickly rose Sir Bedivere, and  
ran,

And, leaping down the ridges lightly,  
plunged

Among the bulrush-beds, and clutch'd  
the sword,

And strongly wheel'd and threw it. The  
great brand

Made lightnings in the splendor of the  
moon,

And flashing round and round, and  
whirl'd in an arch,

Shot like a streamer of the northern  
morn,

Seen where the moving isles of winter  
shock

By night, with noises of the northern sea,  
So flash'd and fell the brand Excalibur;  
But ere he dipped the surface, rose an  
arm

Cloth'd in white samite, mystic, wonder-  
ful,

And caught him by the hilt, and bran-  
dish'd him

Three times, and drew him under in the  
mere.

And lightly went the other to the king.

Then spoke King Arthur, drawing  
thicker breath:

"Now see I by thine eyes that this is  
done.

Speak out; what is it thou hast heard,  
or seen?"

And answer made the bold Sir Bedi-  
vere:

"Sir King, I closed mine eyelids, lest the  
gems

Should blind my purpose, for I never  
saw,

Nor shall see, here or elsewhere, till I  
die,

Not tho' I live three lives of mortal men,  
So great a miracle as yonder hilt.

Then with both hands I flung him, wheel-  
ing him;

But when I look'd again, behold an arm,  
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonder-  
ful,

That caught him by the hilt, and bran-  
dish'd him

Three times, and drew him under in the  
mere."

And answer made King Arthur, breath-  
ing hard:

"My end draws nigh; 'tis time that I  
were gone.

Make broad thy shoulders to receive my  
weight,

And bear me to the margin; yet I fear  
My wound hath taken cold, and I shall  
die."

So saying, from the pavement he half  
rose,

Slowly, with pain, reclining on his arm,  
And looking wistfully with wide blue eyes

As in a picture. Him Sir Bedivere  
Remorsefully regarded thro' his tears,

And would have spoken, but he found not  
words,

Then took with care, and kneeling on one  
knee,

O'er both his shoulders drew the languid  
hands,

And rising bore him thro' the place of  
tombs.

But, as he walk'd, King Arthur panted  
hard,

Like one that feels a nightmare on his  
bed

When all the house is mute. So sigh'd  
the king,

Muttering and murmuring at his ear,  
"Quick, quick!

I fear it is too late, and I shall die."

But the other swiftly strode from ridge  
to ridge,

Clothed with his breath, and looking, as  
he walk'd,

Larger than human on the frozen hills.  
He heard the deep behind him, and a cry

Before. His own thought drove him  
like a goad.

Dry clash'd his harness in the icy caves  
And barren chasms, and all to left and  
right

The bare black cliff clang'd round him,  
as he based

His feet on juts of slippery crag that rang  
Sharp-smitten with the dint of armed  
heels—

And on a sudden, lo! the level lake,  
And the long glories of the winter moon.

Then saw they how there hove a dusky  
barge,

Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to  
stern,

Beneath them; and descending they were  
     ware  
 That all the decks were dense with stately  
     forms  
 Black-stoled, black-hooded, like a dream  
     — by these  
 Three queens with crowns of gold — and  
     from them rose  
 A cry that shiver'd to the tingling stars,  
 And, as it were one voice, an agony  
 Of lamentation, like a wind that shrills  
 All night in a waste land, where no one  
     comes,  
 Or hath come, since the making of the  
     world.  
     Then murmur'd Arthur, "Place me in  
     the barge,"  
 And to the barge they came. There  
     those three queens  
 Put forth their hands, and took the king,  
     and wept.  
 But she that rose the tallest of them  
     all  
 And fairest, laid his head upon her lap,  
 And loosed the shatter'd casque, and  
     chafed his hands,  
 And call'd him by his name, complaining  
     loud,  
 And dropping bitter tears against his  
     brow  
 Striped with dark blood; for all his face  
     was white  
 And colorless, and like the wither'd moon  
 Smote by the fresh beam of the springing  
     east;  
 And all his greaves and cuisses dash'd  
     with drops  
 Of onset; and the light and lustrous  
     curls —  
 That made his forehead like a rising sun  
 High from the dais-throne — were  
     parch'd with dust;  
 Or, clotted into points and hanging loose,  
 Mix'd with the knightly growth that  
     fringed his lips.  
 So like a shatter'd column lay the king;  
 Not like that Arthur who, with lance in  
     rest,  
 From spur to plume a star of tournament,  
 Shot thro' the lists at Camelot, and  
     charged  
 Before the eyes of ladies and of kings.  
     Then loudly cried the bold Sir Bedi-  
     vere:  
 "Ah! my Lord Arthur, whither shall I  
     go?

Where shall I hide my forehead and my  
     eyes?  
 For now I see the true old times are  
     dead,  
 When every morning brought a noble  
     chance,  
 And every chance brought out a noble  
     knight.  
 Such times have been not since the light  
     that led  
 The holy Elders with the gift of myrrh.  
 But now the whole ROUND TABLE is dis-  
     solved  
 Which was an image of the mighty world;  
 And I, the last, go forth companionless,  
 And the days darken round me, and the  
     years,  
 Among new men, strange faces, other  
     minds."  
     And slowly answer'd Arthur from the  
     barge:  
"The old order changeth, yielding place  
to new,  
And God fulfills himself in many ways,  
Lest one good custom should corrupt the  
world.  
Comfort thyself: what comfort is in me?  
I have lived my life, and that which I  
have done  
May He within himself make pure! but  
thou,  
If thou shouldst never see my face again,  
Pray for my soul. More things are  
wrought by prayer  
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore,  
let thy voice  
Rise like a fountain for me night and day.  
For what are men better than sheep or  
goats  
That nourish a blind life within the brain,  
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of  
prayer  
Both for themselves and those who call  
them friend?  
 For so the whole round earth is every  
     way  
 Bound by gold chains about the feet of  
     God.  
 But now farewell. I am going a long way  
 With these thou seest — if indeed I go —  
 For all my mind is clouded with a doubt —  
 To the island-valley of Avilion;  
 Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,  
 Nor ever wind blows loudly, but it lies  
 Deep-meadow'd, happy, fair with orchard  
     lawns

And bowery hollows crown'd with  
summer sea,  
Where I will heal me of my grievous  
wound."

So said he, and the barge with oar and  
sail

Moved from the brink, like some full-  
breasted swan

That, fluting a wild carol ere her death,  
Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes  
the flood

With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir  
Bedivere

Revolving many memories, till the hull  
Look'd one back dot against the verge  
of dawn,

And on the mere the wailing died away.

1834. 1842, 1869.<sup>1</sup>

### DORA <sup>2</sup>

WITH farmer Allan at the farm abode  
William and Dora. William was his son,  
And she his niece. He often look'd at  
them

And often thought, "I'll make them man  
and wife."

Now Dora felt her uncle's will in all,  
And yearn'd toward William; but the  
youth, because

He had always been with her in the  
house,

Thought not of Dora.

Then there came a day  
When Allan call'd his son, and said:

"My son,  
I married late, but I would wish to see  
My grandchild on my knees before I die;  
And I have set my heart upon a match.

Now therefore look to Dora; she is well  
To look to; thrifty too beyond her age.  
She is my brother's daughter; he and I  
Had once hard words, and parted, and  
he died

In foreign lands; but for his sake I bred  
His daughter Dora. Take her for your  
wife;

For I have wish'd this marriage night  
and day,

For many years." But William an-  
swered short:

"I cannot marry Dora; by my life,  
I will not marry Dora!" Then the old  
man

Was wroth, and doubled up his hands,  
and said:

"You will not, boy! you dare to answer  
thus!

But in my time a father's word was law,  
And so it shall be now for me. Look to  
it;

Consider, William, take a month to  
think,

And let me have an answer to my wish,  
Or, by the Lord that made me, you shall  
pack,

And never more darken my doors again."  
But William answer'd madly, bit his lips,  
And broke away. The more he look'd at  
her

The less he liked her; and his ways were  
harsh;

But Dora bore them meekly. Then be-  
fore

The month was out he left his father's  
house,

And hired himself to work within the  
fields;

And half in love, half spite, he woo'd and  
wed

A laborer's daughter, Mary Morrison.

Then, when the bells were ringing,  
Allan call'd

His niece and said: "My girl, I love you  
well;

But if you speak with him that was my  
son,

Or change a word with her he calls his  
wife,

My home is none of yours. My will is  
law."

And Dora promised, being meek. She  
thought,

"It cannot be; my uncle's mind will  
change!"

And days went on, and there was born  
a boy

To William; then distresses came on  
him,

And day by day he passed his father's  
gate,

Heart-broken, and his father helped  
him not.

But Dora stored what little she could  
save,

And sent it them by stealth, nor did  
they know

<sup>1</sup> In 1869 the "Morte d'Arthur" was incorporated  
in the "Passing of Arthur," the last of the *Idylls of  
the King*.

<sup>2</sup> See the *Life of Tennyson*, I, 195-196 and 265.



Who sent it; till at last a fever seized  
On William, and in harvest time he died.

Then Dora went to Mary. Mary sat  
And look'd with tears upon her boy, and thought

Hard things of Dora. Dora came and said:

"I have obey'd my uncle until now,  
And I have sinn'd, for it was all thro' me  
This evil came on William at the first.

But, Mary, for the sake of him that's gone,

And for your sake, the woman that he chose,

And for this orphan, I am come to you.  
You know there has not been for these five years

So full a harvest. Let me take the boy,  
And I will set him in my uncle's eye

Among the wheat; that when his heart is glad

Of the full harvest, he may see the boy  
And bless him for the sake of him that's gone."

And Dora took the child, and went her way

Across the wheat, and sat upon a mound  
That was unsown, where many poppies grew.

Far off the farmer came into the field  
And spied her not, for none of all his men

Dare tell him Dora waited with the child;  
And Dora would have risen and gone to him,

But her heart fail'd her; and the reapers reap'd,

And the sun fell, and all the land was dark.

But when the morrow came, she rose and took

The child once more, and sat upon the mound;

And made a little wreath of all the flowers  
That grew about, and tied it round his hat

To make him pleasing in her uncle's eye.  
Then when the farmer pass'd into the field

He spied her, and he left his men at work,

And came and said: "Where were you yesterday?

Whose child is that? What are you doing here?"

So Dora cast her eyes upon the ground,  
And answer'd softly, "This is William's child!"

"And did I not," said Allan, "did I not  
Forbid you, Dora?" Dora said again:

"Do with me as you will, but take the child,

And bless him for the sake of him that's gone!"

And Allan said: "I see it is a trick  
Got up betwixt you and the woman there.

I must be taught my duty, and by you!  
You knew my word was law, and yet

you dared  
To slight it. Well—for I will take the boy;

But go you hence, and never see me more."

So saying, he took the boy that cried aloud

And struggled hard. The wreath of flowers fell

At Dora's feet. She bow'd upon her hands,

And the boy's cry came to her from the field

More and more distant. She bow'd down her head,

Remembering the day when first she came,

And all the things that had been. She bow'd down

And wept in secret; and the reapers reap'd,

And the sun fell, and all the land was dark.

Then Dora went to Mary's house, and stood

Upon the threshold. Mary saw the boy  
Was not with Dora. She broke out in

praise  
To God, that help'd her in her widow-hood.

And Dora said: "My uncle took the boy;  
But, Mary, let me live and work with you:

He says that he will never see me more."  
Then answer'd Mary: "This shall never

be,  
That thou shouldst take my trouble on thyself;

And, now I think, he shall not have the boy,

For he will teach him hardness, and to slight

His mother. Therefore thou and I will go,

And I will have my boy, and bring him home;

And I will beg of him to take thee back.



But if he will not take thee back again,  
Then thou and I will live within one  
house,  
And work for William's child, until he  
grows  
Of age to help us."

So the women kiss'd  
Each other, and set out, and reach'd the  
farm.

The door was off the latch; they peep'd,  
and saw

The boy set up betwixt his grandsire's  
knees,

Who thrust him in the hollows of his arm,  
And clapped him on the hands and on the  
cheeks,

Like one that loved him; and the lad  
stretch'd out

And babbled for the golden seal, that  
hung

From Allan's watch and sparkled by the  
fire.

Then they came in; but when the boy  
beheld

His mother, he cried out to come to her;  
And Allan set him down, and Mary said:

"O father!—if you let me call you  
so —

I never came a-begging for myself,  
Or William, or this child; but now I  
come

For Dora; take her back, she loves you  
well.

O Sir, when William died, he died at peace  
With all men; for I ask'd him, and he  
said,

He could not ever rue his marrying me —  
I had been a patient wife; but, Sir, he  
said

That he was wrong to cross his father  
thus.

'God bless him!' he said, 'and may he  
never know

The troubles I have gone thro'!' Then  
he turn'd

His face and pass'd — unhappy that I  
am!

But now, Sir, let me have my boy, for you  
Will make him hard, and he will learn to  
slight

His father's memory; and take Dora  
back,

And let all this be as it was before."

So Mary said, and Dora hid her face  
By Mary. There was silence in the  
room;

And all at once the old man burst in sobs:  
"I have been to blame — to blame. I  
have kill'd my son.

I have kill'd him — but I loved him —  
my dear son.

May God forgive me! — I have been to  
blame.

Kiss me, my children."

Then they clung about  
The old man's neck, and kiss'd him many  
times.

And all the man was broken with re-  
morse;

And all his love came back a hundred-  
fold;

And for three hours he sobb'd o'er  
William's child

Thinking of William.

So those four abode  
Within one house together, and as years  
Went forward Mary took another mate;  
But Dora lived unmarried till her death.

*About 1835. 1842.*

## ULYSSES<sup>1</sup>

It little profits that an idle king,  
By this still hearth, among these barren  
crag.

Match'd with an aged wife, I mete and  
dole

Unequal laws unto a savage race,  
That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and  
know not me.

I cannot rest from travel; I will drink  
Life to the lees. All times I have en-  
joy'd

Greatly, have suffer'd greatly, both with  
those

That loved me, and alone; on shore, and  
when

Thro' scudding drifts the rainy Hyades  
Vext the dim sea. I am become a name;  
For always roaming with a hungry heart  
Much have I seen and known, — cities  
of men

And manners, climates, councils, govern-  
ments,

Myself not least, but honor'd of them  
all, —

And drunk delight of battle with my  
peers,

Far on the ringing plains of windy Troy.

<sup>1</sup> See the *Life of Tennyson*, I, 106.

I am a part of all that I have met;  
 Yet all experience is an arch where thro'  
 Gleams that untravell'd world whose  
 margin fades

For ever and for ever when I move.  
 How dull it is to pause, to make an end,  
 To rust unburnish'd, not to shine in use!  
 As tho' to breathe were life! Life piled  
 on life

Were all too little, and of one to me  
 Little remains; but every hour is saved  
 From that eternal silence, something  
 more.

A bringer of new things: and vile it were  
 For some three suns to store and hoard  
 myself,

And this gray spirit yearning in desire  
 To follow knowledge like a sinking star,  
 Beyond the utmost bound of human  
 thought.

This is my son, mine own Telemachus,  
 To whom I leave the sceptre and the  
 isle, —

Well-loved of me, discerning to fulfil  
 This labor, by slow prudence to make  
 mild

A rugged people, and thro' soft degrees  
 Subdue them to the useful and the good.  
 Most blameless is he, centred in the  
 sphere

Of common duties decent, not to fail  
 In offices of tenderness, and pay  
 Meet adoration to my household gods,  
 When I am gone. He works his work, I  
 mine.

There lies the port; the vessel puffs her  
 sail;  
 There gloom the dark, broad seas. My  
 mariners.

Souls that have toil'd, and wrought, and  
 thought with me, —

That ever with a frolic welcome took  
 The thunder and the sunshine, and op-  
 posed

Free hearts, free foreheads, — you and I  
 are old;

Old age hath yet his honor and his toil.  
 Death closes all; but something ere the  
 end,

Some work of noble note, may yet be  
 done,

Not unbecoming men that strove with  
 Gods.

The lights begin to twinkle from the  
 rocks;

The long day wanes; the slow moon  
 climbs; the deep  
 Moans round with many voices. Come,  
 my friends,

'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.  
 Push off, and sitting well in order smite  
 The sounding furrows; for my purpose  
 holds

To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths  
 Of all the western stars, until I die.

It may be that the gulfs will wash us  
 down;

It may be we shall touch the Happy  
 Isles,

And see the great Achilles whom we knew.  
 Tho' much is taken, much abides; and  
 tho'

We are not now that strength which in  
 old days

Moved earth and heaven, that which we  
 are, we are, —

One equal temper of heroic hearts,  
 Made weak by time and fate, but strong  
 in will

To strive, to seek, to find, and not to  
 yield. 1842.

#### LOCKSLEY HALL<sup>1</sup>

COMRADES, leave me here a little, while  
 as yet 'tis early morn;  
 Leave me here, and when you want me,  
 sound upon the bugle-horn.

'Tis the place, and all around it, as of  
 old, the curlews call,  
 Dreary gleams about the moorland flying  
 over Locksley Hall;

Locksley Hall, that in the distance over-  
 looks the sandy tracts,  
 And the hollow ocean-ridges roaring  
 into cataracts.

Many a night from yonder ivied case-  
 ment, ere I went to rest,  
 Did I look on great Orion sloping slowly  
 to the west.

Many a night I saw the Pleiads, rising  
 thro' the mellow shade,  
 Glitter like a swarm of fireflies tangled  
 in a silver braid.

<sup>1</sup> See the *Life of Tennyson*, I, 176 and 195.

Here about the beach I wander'd, nour-  
ishing a youth sublime  
With the fairy tales of science, and the  
long result of time;

When the centuries behind me like a  
fruitful land reposed;  
When I clung to all the present for the  
promise that it closed;

When I dipped into the future far as  
human eye could see,  
Saw the vision of the world and all the  
wonder that would be. —

In the spring a fuller crimson comes  
upon the robin's breast;  
In the spring the wanton lapwing gets  
himself another crest;

In the spring a livelier iris changes on the  
burnish'd dove;  
In the spring a young man's fancy lightly  
turns to thoughts of love.

Then her cheek was pale and thinner  
than should be for one so young,  
And her eyes on all my motions with a  
mute observance hung.

And I said, "My cousin Amy, speak, and  
speak the truth to me,  
Trust me, cousin, all the current of my  
being sets to thee."

On her pallid cheek and forehead came a  
color and a light,  
As I have seen the rosy red flushing in  
the northern night.

And she turn'd — her bosom shaken with  
a sudden storm of sighs —  
All the spirit deeply dawning in the dark  
of hazel eyes —

Saying, "I have hid my feelings, fearing  
they should do me wrong;"  
Saying, "Dost thou love me, cousin?"  
weeping, "I have loved thee long."

Love took up the glass of time, and  
turn'd it in his glowing hands;  
Every moment, lightly shaken, ran itself  
in golden sands.

Love took up the harp of Life, and smote  
on all the chords with might;  
Smote the chord of Self, that, trembling,  
past in music out of sight.

Many a morning on the moorland did we  
hear the copses ring,  
And her whisper throng'd my pulses with  
the fulness of the spring.

Many an evening by the waters did we  
watch the stately ships,  
And our spirits rush'd together at the  
touching of the lips.

O my cousin, shallow-hearted! O my  
Amy, mine no more!  
O the dreary, dreary, moorland! O the  
barren, barren shore!

Falser than all fancy fathoms, falser than  
all songs have sung,  
Puppet to a father's threat, and servile  
to a shrewish tongue!

Is it well to wish thee happy? having  
known me — to decline  
On a range of lower feelings and a nar-  
rower heart than mine!

Yet it shall be; thou shalt lower to his  
level day by day,  
What is fine within thee growing coarse  
to sympathize with clay.

As the husband is, the wife is; thou art  
mated with a clown,  
And the grossness of his nature will have  
weight to drag thee down.

He will hold thee, when his passion shall  
have spent its novel force,  
Something better than his dog, a little  
dearer than his horse.

What is this? his eyes are heavy; think  
not they are glazed with wine.  
Go to him, it is thy duty; kiss him, take  
his hand in thine.

It may be my lord is weary, that his brain  
is overwrought;  
Soothe him with thy finer fancies, touch  
him with thy lighter thought.

He will answer to the purpose, easy  
things to understand —  
Better thou wert dead before me, tho' I  
slew thee with my hand!

Better thou and I were lying, hidden  
from the heart's disgrace,  
Roll'd in one another's arms, and silent  
in a last embrace.

Cursed be the social wants that sin  
against the strength of youth!  
Cursed be the social lies that warp us  
from the living truth!

Cursed be the sickly forms that err from  
honest Nature's rule!  
Cursed be the gold that gilds the  
straiten'd forehead of the fool!

Well — 'tis well that I should bluster! —  
Hadst thou less unworthy proved —  
Would to God — for I had loved thee  
more than ever wife was loved.

Am I mad, that I should cherish that  
which bears but bitter fruit?  
I will pluck it from my bosom, tho' my  
heart be at the root.

Never, tho' my mortal summers to such  
length of years should come  
As the many-winter'd crow that leads  
the clanging rookery home.

Where is comfort? in division of the  
records of the mind?  
Can I part her from herself, and love her  
as I knew her, kind?

I remember one that perish'd; sweetly  
did she speak and move;  
Such a one do I remember, whom to look  
at was to love.

Can I think of her as dead, and love her  
for the love she bore?  
No — she never loved me truly; love is  
love for evermore.

Comfort? comfort scorn'd of devils! this  
is truth the poet sings,  
That a sorrow's crown of sorrow is re-  
membering happier things.

Drug thy memories, lest thou learn it,  
lest thy heart be put to proof,  
In the dead unhappy night, and when  
the rain is on the roof.

Like a dog, he hunts in dreams, and  
thou art staring at the wall,  
Where the dying night-lamp flickers,  
and the shadows rise and fall.

Then a hand shall pass before thee, point-  
ing to his drunken sleep,  
To thy widow'd marriage-pillows, to the  
tears that thou wilt weep.

Thou shalt hear the "Never, never,"  
whisper'd by the phantom years,  
And a song from out the distance in the  
ringing of thine ears;

And an eye shall vex thee, looking ancient  
kindness on thy pain.  
Turn thee, turn thee on thy pillow; get  
thee to thy rest again.

Nay, but Nature brings thee solace; for  
a tender voice will cry.  
'Tis a purer life than thine, a lip to drain  
thy trouble dry.

Baby lips will laugh me down; my latest  
rival brings thee rest.  
Baby fingers, waxen touches, press me  
from the mother's breast.

O, the child too clothes the father with  
a dearness not his due.  
Half is thine and half is his; it will be  
worthy of the two.

O, I see thee old and formal, fitted to thy  
petty part,  
With a little hoard of maxims preaching  
down a daughter's heart.

"They were dangerous guides the feelings  
— she herself was not exempt —  
Truly, she herself had suffer'd" — Perish  
in thy self-contempt!

Overlive it — lower yet — be happy!  
wherefore should I care?  
I myself must mix with action, lest I  
wither by despair.

What is that which I should turn to,  
lighting upon days like these?  
Every door is barr'd with gold, and opens  
but to golden keys.

Every gate is throng'd with suitors, all  
the markets overflow.  
I have but an angry fancy; what is that  
which I should do?

I had been content to perish, falling on  
the foeman's ground,  
When the ranks are roll'd in vapor, and  
the winds are laid with sound.

But the jingling of the guinea helps the  
hurt that Honor feels,  
And the nations do but murmur, snarling  
at each other's heels.

Can I but relive in sadness? I will turn  
that earlier page.  
Hide me from my deep emotion, O thou  
wondrous Mother-Age!

Make me feel the wild pulsation that I felt  
before the strife,  
When I heard my days before me, and  
the tumult of my life;

Yearning for the large excitement that  
the coming years would yield,  
Eager-hearted as a boy when first he  
leaves his father's field,

And at night along the dusky highway  
near and nearer drawn,  
Sees in heaven the light of London flaring  
like a dreary dawn;

And his spirit leaps within him to be gone  
before him then,  
Underneath the light he looks at, in  
among the throngs of men;

Men, my brothers, men the workers, ever  
reaping something new;  
That which they have done but earnest  
of the things that they shall do.

For I dipped into the future, far as human  
eye could see.  
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the  
wonder that would be;

Saw the heavens fill with commerce, ar-  
gosies of magic sails,  
Pilot of the purple twilight, dropping  
down with costly bales;

Heard the heavens fill with shouting, and  
there rain'd a ghastly dew  
For the nations' airy navies grappling  
in the central blue;

Far along the world-wide whisper of the  
south-wind rushing warm,  
With the standards of the peoples plung-  
ing thro' the thunder-storm.

Till the war-drum throbb'd no longer,  
and the battle-flags were furl'd  
In the Parliament of man, the Federation  
of the world.

There the common sense of most shall  
hold a fretful realm in awe,  
And the kindly earth shall slumber,  
lapped in universal law.

So I triumph'd ere my passion sweeping  
thro' me left me dry,  
Left me with the palsied heart, and left  
me with the jaundiced eye;

Eye, to which all order festers, all things  
here are out of joint.  
Science moves, but slowly, slowly, creep-  
ing on from point to point;

Slowly comes a hungry people, as a lion,  
creeping nigher,  
Glares at one that nods and winks behind  
a slowly-dying fire.

Yet I doubt not thro' the ages one in-  
creasing purpose runs,  
And the thoughts of men are widen'd  
with the process of the suns.

What is that to him that reaps not har-  
vest of his youthful joys,  
Tho' the deep heart of existence beat for  
ever like a boy's?

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers,  
and I linger on the shore,  
And the individual withers, and the  
world is more and more.

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers,  
and he bears a laden breast,  
Full of sad experience, moving toward the  
stillness of his rest.

Hark, my merry comrades call me,  
sounding on the bugle-horn,  
They to whom my foolish passion were a  
target for their scorn.

Shall it not be scorn to me to harp on such  
a moulder'd string?  
I am shamed thro' all my nature to have  
loved so slight a thing.

Weakness to be wroth with weakness!  
woman's pleasure, woman's pain—  
Nature made them blinder motions  
bounded in a shallower brain.

Woman is the lesser man, and all thy  
passions, match'd with mine,  
Are as moonlight unto sunlight, and as  
water unto wine —

Here at least, where nature sickens,  
nothing. Ah, for some retreat  
Deep in yonder shining Orient, where my  
life began to beat,



Where in wild Mahratta-battle fell my  
father evil-starr'd; —  
I was left a trampled orphan, and a selfish  
uncle's ward.

Or to burst all links of habit — there to  
wander far away,  
On from island unto island at the gate-  
ways of the day.

Larger constellations burning, mellow  
moons and happy skies,  
Breadths of tropic shade and palms in  
cluster, knots of Paradise.

Never comes the trader, never floats an  
European flag,  
Slides the bird o'er lustrous woodland,  
swings the trailer from the crag;

Droops the heavy-blossom'd bower, hangs  
the heavy-fruited tree —  
Summer isles of Eden lying in dark-  
purple spheres of sea.

There methinks would be enjoyment  
more than in this march of mind,  
In the steamship, in the railway, in the  
thoughts that shake mankind.

There the passions cramp'd no longer shall  
have scope and breathing space;  
I will take some savage woman, she  
shall rear my dusky race.

Iron-jointed, supple-sinew'd, they shall  
dive, and they shall run,  
Catch the wild goat by the hair, and  
hurl their lances in the sun;

Whistle back the parrot's call, and leap  
the rainbows of the brooks.  
Not with blinded eyesight poring over  
miserable books —

Fool, again the dream, the fancy! but I  
*know* my words are wild,  
But I count the gray barbarian lower  
than the Christian child.

I, to herd with narrow foreheads, vacant  
of our glorious gains,  
Like a beast with lower pleasures, like a  
beast with lower pains!

Mated with a squalid savage — what to  
me were sun or clime!

I the heir of all the ages, in the foremost  
files of time —

I that rather held it better men should  
perish one by one,  
Than that earth should stand at gaze like  
Joshua's moon in Ajalon!

Not in vain the distance beacons. For-  
ward, forward let us range,  
Let the great world spin for ever down  
the ringing grooves of change.

Thro' the shadow of the globe we sweep  
into the younger day;  
Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle  
of Cathay.

Mother-Age, — for mine I knew not, —  
help me as when life begun;  
Rift the hills, and roll the waters, flash  
the lightnings, weigh the sun.

O, I see the crescent promise of my spirit  
hath not set.  
Ancient founts of inspiration well thro'  
all my fancy yet.

Howsoever these things be, a long fare-  
well to Locksley Hall!  
Now for me the woods may wither, now  
for me the roof-tree fall.

Comes a vapor from the margin, blacken-  
ing over heath and holt,  
Cramming all the blast before it, in its  
breast a thunderbolt.

Let it fall on Locksley Hall, with rain or  
hail, or fire or snow;  
For the mighty wind arises, roaring sea-  
ward, and I go. 1842.

## GODIVA

*I waited for the train at Coventry;  
I hung with grooms and porters on the bridge,  
To watch the three tall spires; and there  
I shaped*

*The city's ancient legend into this: —*

Not only we, the latest seed of Time,  
New men, that in the flying of a wheel  
Cry down the past, not only we, that  
prate

Of rights and wrongs, have loved the  
people well,

And loathed to see them overtax'd; but  
she

Did more, and underwent, and over-  
came,

The woman of a thousand summers back,  
Godiva, wife to that grim Earl, who  
ruled

In Coventry; for when he laid a tax  
Upon his town, and all the mothers  
brought

Their children, clamoring, "If we pay,  
we starve!"

She sought her lord, and found him,  
where he strode

About the hall, among his dogs, alone,  
His beard a foot before him, and his hair  
A yard behind. She told him of their  
tears,

And pray'd him, "If they pay this tax  
they starve."

Whereat he stared, replying, half-amazed,  
"You would not let your little finger  
ache

For such as *these?*" — "But I would  
die," said she.

He laugh'd, and swore by Peter and by  
Paul,

Then filip'd at the diamond in her ear:  
"O, ay, ay, ay, you talk!" — "Alas!"  
she said,

"But prove me what it is I would not  
do."

And from a heart as rough as Esau's  
hand,

He answer'd, "Ride you naked thro' the  
town,

And I repeat it;" and nodding, as in  
scorn,

He parted, with great strides among his  
dogs.

So left alone, the passions of her mind,  
As winds from all the compass shift and  
blow,

Made war upon each other for an hour,  
Till pity won. She sent a herald forth,  
And bade him cry, with sound of trumpet,  
all

The hard condition, but that she would  
loose

The people; therefore, as they loved her  
well,

From then till noon no foot should pace  
the street,

No eye look down, she passing, but that  
all

Should keep within, door shut, and win-  
dow barr'd.

Then fled she to her inmost bower, and  
there

Unclasp'd the wedded eagles of her belt,

The grim Earl's gift; but ever at a breath  
She linger'd, looking like a summer  
moon

Half-dipped in cloud. Anon she shook  
her head,

And shower'd the rippled ringlets to her  
knee;

Unclad herself in haste; adown the  
stair

Stole on; and like a creeping sunbeam  
slid

From pillar unto pillar, until she reach'd  
The gateway; there she found her pal-  
frey trapt

In purple blazon'd with armorial gold.  
Then she rode forth, clothed on with  
chastity.

The deep air listen'd round her as she  
rode,

And all the low wind hardly breathed  
for fear.

The little wide-mouth'd heads upon the  
spout

Had cunning eyes to see; the barking  
cur

Made her cheek flame; her palfrey's  
footfall shot

Light horrors thro' her pulses; the blind  
walls

Were full of chinks and holes; and over-  
head

Fantastic gables, crowding, stared; but  
she

Not less thro' all bore up, till, last, she  
saw

The white-flower'd elder-thicket from  
the field

Gleam thro' the Gothic archway in the  
wall.

Then she rode back, clothed on with  
chastity.

And one low churl, compact of thankless  
earth,

The fatal byword of all years to come,  
Boring a little auger-hole in fear,

Peep'd — but his eyes, before they had  
their will,

Were shrivell'd into darkness in his  
head,

And dropped before him. So the Powers,  
who wait

On noble deeds, cancell'd a sense misused;  
And she, that knew not, pass'd; and all  
at once,

With twelve great shocks of sound, the  
shameless noon

Was clash'd and hammer'd from a hundred towers,  
 One after one; but even then she gain'd  
 Her bower, whence reissuing, robed and crown'd,  
 To meet her lord, she took the tax away  
 And built herself an everlasting name.  
 1842.

## SIR GALAHAD

My good blade carves the casques of men,  
 My tough lance thrusteth sure,  
 My strength is as the strength of ten,  
 Because my heart is pure.  
 The shattering trumpet shrilleth high,  
 The hard brands shiver on the steel,  
 The splinter'd spear-shafts crack and fly,  
 The horse and rider reel;  
 They reel, they roll in clanging lists,  
 And when the tide of combat stands,  
 Perfume and flowers fall in showers,  
 That lightly rain from ladies' hands.

How sweet are looks that ladies bend  
 On whom their favors fall!  
 For them I battle till the end,  
 To save from shame and thrall;  
 But all my heart is drawn above,  
 My knees are bow'd in crypt and shrine;  
 I never felt the kiss of love,  
 Nor maiden's hand in mine.  
 More bounteous aspects on me beam,  
 Me mightier transports move and thrill;  
 So keep I fair thro' faith and prayer  
 A virgin heart in work and will.

When down the stormy crescent goes,  
 A light before me swims,  
 Between dark stems the forest glows,  
 I hear a noise of hymns.  
 Then by some secret shrine I ride;  
 I hear a voice, but none are there;  
 The stalls are void, the doors are wide,  
 The tapers burning fair.  
 Fair gleams the snowy altar-cloth,  
 The silver vessels sparkle clean,  
 The shrill bell rings, the censer swings,  
 And solemn chants resound between.

Sometimes on lonely mountain-meres  
 I find a magic bark.  
 I leap on board; no helmsman steers;  
 I float till all is dark.

A gentle sound, an awful light!  
 Three angels bear the Holy Grail;  
 With folded feet, in stoles of white,  
 On sleeping wings they sail.  
 Ah, blessed vision! blood of God!  
 My spirit beats her mortal bars,  
 As down dark tides the glory slides,  
 And starlike mingles with the stars.

When on my goodly charger borne  
 Thro' dreaming towns I go,  
 The cock crows ere the Christmas morn,  
 The streets are dumb with snow.  
 The tempest crackles on the leads,  
 And, ringing, springs from brand and mail;  
 But o'er the dark a glory spreads,  
 And gilds the driving hail.  
 I leave the plain, I climb the height;  
 No branchy thicket shelter yields;  
 But blessed forms in whistling storms  
 Fly o'er waste fens and windy fields.

A maiden knight — to me is given  
 Such hope, I know not fear;  
 I yearn to breathe the airs of heaven  
 That often meet me here.  
 I muse on joy that will not cease,  
 Pure spaces clothed in living beams,  
 Pure lilies of eternal peace,  
 Whose odors haunt my dreams;  
 And, stricken by an angel's hand,  
 This mortal armor that I wear,  
 This weight and size, this heart and eyes,  
 Are touch'd, are turn'd to finest air.

The clouds are broken in the sky,  
 And thro' the mountain-walls  
 A rolling organ-harmony  
 Swells up and shakes and falls.  
 Then move the trees, the copses nod,  
 Wings flutter, voices hover clear:  
 "O just and faithful knight of God!  
 Ride on! the prize is near."  
 So pass I hostel, hall, and grange;  
 By bridge and ford, by park and pale,  
 All-arm'd I ride, whate'er betide,  
 Until I find the Holy Grail. 1842.

## A FAREWELL

Flow down, cold rivulet, to the sea,  
 Thy tribute wave deliver;  
 No more by thee my steps shall be,  
 For ever and for ever.

Flow, softly flow, by lawn and lea,  
A rivulet, then a river;  
Nowhere by thee my steps shall be,  
For ever and for ever.

But here will sigh thine alder-tree,  
And here thine aspen shiver;  
And here by thee will hum the bee,  
For ever and for ever.

A thousand suns will stream on thee,  
A thousand moons will quiver;  
But not by thee my steps shall be,  
For ever and for ever. 1842.

### THE VISION OF SIN

#### I

I HAD a vision when the night was late;  
A youth came riding toward a palace-  
gate.

He rode a horse with wings, that would  
have flown,

But that his heavy rider kept him down.  
And from the palace came a child of sin,  
And took him by the curls, and led him  
in,

Where sat a company with heated eyes,  
Expecting when a fountain should arise,  
A sleepy light upon their brows and lips —  
As when the sun, a crescent of eclipse,  
Dreams over lake and lawn, and isles and  
capes —

Suffused them, sitting, lying, languid  
shapes,

By heaps of gourds, and skins of wine,  
and piles of grapes.

#### II

Then methought I heard a mellow sound,  
Gathering up from all the lower ground;  
Narrowing in to where they sat assembled,  
Low voluptuous music winding trembled,  
Woven in circles. They that heard it  
sigh'd,

Panted hand-in-hand with faces pale,  
Swung themselves, and in low tones re-  
plied;

Till the fountain spouted, showering wide  
Sleet of diamond-drift and pearly hail.

Then the music touch'd the gates and died,  
Rose again from where it seem'd to fail,  
Storm'd in orbs of song, a growing gale;  
Till thronging in and in, to where they  
waited,

As 't were a hundred-throated nightingale,  
The strong tempestuous treble throb'd  
and palpitated;

Ran into its giddiest whirl of sound,  
Caught the sparkles, and in circles,  
Purple gauzes, golden hazes, liquid mazes,  
Flung the torrent rainbow round.  
Then they started from their places,  
Moved with violence, changed in hue,  
Caught each other with wild grimaces,  
Half-invisible to the view,  
Wheeling with precipitate paces  
To the melody, till they flew,  
Hair and eyes and limbs and faces,  
Twisted hard in fierce embraces,  
Like to Furies, like to Graces,  
Dash'd together in blinding dew;  
Till, kill'd with some luxurious agony,  
The nerve-dissolving melody  
Fluttered headlong from the sky.

#### III

And then I look'd up toward a mountain-  
tract,

That girt the region with high cliff and  
lawn.

I saw that every morning, far with-  
drawn

Beyond the darkness and the cataract,  
God made Himself an awful rose of dawn,  
Unheeded; and detaching, fold by fold,  
From those still heights, and, slowly  
drawing near,

A vapor heavy, hueless, formless, cold,  
Came floating on for many a month and  
year,

Unheeded; and I thought I would have  
spoken,

And warn'd that madman ere it grew too  
late,

But, as in dreams, I could not. Mine  
was broken,

When that cold vapor touch'd the palace-  
gate,

And link'd again. I saw within my head  
A gray and gap-tooth'd man as lean as  
death,

Who slowly rode across a wither'd heath,  
And lighted at a ruin'd inn, and said:

#### IV

"Wrinkled ostler, grim and thin!  
Here is custom come your way;  
Take my brute, and lead him in,  
Stuff his ribs with mouldy hay.

"Bitter barmaid, waning fast!  
See that sheets are on my bed.  
What! the flower of life is past;  
It is long before you wed.

"Slip-shod waiter, lank and sour,  
At the Dragon on the heath!  
Let us have a quiet hour,  
Let us hob-and-nob with Death.

"I am old, but let me drink;  
Bring me spices, bring me wine;  
I remember, when I think,  
That my youth was half divine.

"Wine is good for shrivell'd lips,  
When a blanket wraps the day.  
When the rotten woodland drips,  
And the leaf is stamp'd in clay.

"Sit thee down, and have no shame,  
Cheek by jowl, and knee by knee;  
What care I for any name?  
What for order or degree?

"Let me screw thee up a peg;  
Let me loose thy tongue with wine;  
Callest thou that thing a leg?  
Which is thinnest? thine or mine?

"Thou shalt not be saved by works,  
Thou hast been a sinner too;  
Ruin'd trunks on wither'd forks,  
Empty scarecrows, I and you!

"Fill the cup and fill the can,  
Have a rouse before the morn,  
Every moment dies a man,  
Every moment one is born.

"We are men of ruin'd blood;  
Therefore comes it we are wise.  
Fish are we that love the mud,  
Rising to no fancy-flies.

"Name and fame! to fly sublime  
Thro' the courts, the camps, the schools,  
Is to be the ball of Time,  
Banded by the hands of fools.

"Friendship! — to be two in one —  
Let the canting liar pack!  
Well I know, when I am gone,  
How she mouths behind my back.

"Virtue! — to be good and just —  
Every heart, when sifted well,  
Is a clot of warmer dust,  
Mix'd with cunning sparks of hell.

"O, we two as well can look  
Whited thought and cleanly life  
As the priest, above his book  
Leering at his neighbor's wife.

"Fill the cup and fill the can,  
Have a rouse before the morn:  
Every moment dies a man,  
Every moment one is born.

"Drink, and let the parties rave;  
They are fill'd with idle spleen,  
Rising, falling, like a wave,  
For they know not what they mean.

"He that roars for liberty  
Faster binds a tyrant's power,  
And the tyrant's cruel glee  
Forces on the freer hour.

"Fill the can and fill the cup;  
All the windy ways of men  
Are but dust that rises up,  
And is lightly laid again.

"Greet her with applausive breath,  
Freedom, gaily doth she tread;  
In her right a civic wreath,  
In her left a human head.

"No, I love not what is new;  
She is of an ancient house,  
And I think we know the hue  
Of that cap upon her brows.

"Let her go! her thirst she slakes  
Where the bloody conduit runs,  
Then her sweetest meal she makes  
On the first-born of her sons.

"Drink to lofty hopes that cool, —  
Visions of a perfect State;  
Drink we, last, the public fool,  
Frantic love and frantic hate.

"Chant me now some wicked stave,  
Till thy drooping courage rise,  
And the glow-worm of the grave  
Glimmer in thy rheumy eyes.

"Fear not thou to loose thy tongue,  
Set thy hoary fancies free;  
What is loathsome to the young  
Savors well to thee and me.

"Change, reverting to the years,  
When thy nerves could understand  
What there is in loving tears,  
And the warmth of hand in hand.



"Tell me tales of thy first love —  
 April hopes, the fools of chance —  
 Till the graves begin to move,  
 And the dead begin to dance.

"Fill the can and fill the cup;  
 All the windy ways of men  
 Are but dust that rises up,  
 And is lightly laid again.

"Trooping from their mouldy dens  
 The chap-fallen circle spreads —  
 Welcome, fellow-citizens,  
 Hollow hearts and empty heads!

"You are bones, and what of that?  
 Every face, however full,  
 Padded round with flesh and fat,  
 Is but modell'd on a skull.

"Death is king, and Vivat Rex!  
 Tread a measure on the stones,  
 Madam — if I know your sex  
 From the fashion of your bones.

"No, I cannot praise the fire  
 In your eye — nor yet your lip;  
 All the more do I admire  
 Joints of cunning workmanship.

"Lo! God's likeness — the ground-  
 plan —  
 Neither modell'd, glazed, nor framed:  
 Buss me, thou rough sketch of man,  
 Far too naked to be shamed!

"Drink to Fortune, drink to Chance,  
 While we keep a little breath!  
 Drink to heavy Ignorance!  
 Hob-and-nob with brother Death!

"Thou art mazed, the night is long,  
 And the longer night is near —  
 What! I am not all as wrong  
 As a bitter jest is dear.

"Youthful hopes, by scores, to all,  
 When the locks are crisp and curl'd;  
 Unto me my maudlin gall  
 And my mockeries of the world.

"Fill the cup and fill the can;  
 Mingle madness, mingle scorn!  
 Dregs of life, and lees of man;  
 Yet we will not die forlorn."

V

The voice grew faint; there came a further  
 change;  
 Once more uprose the mystic mountain  
 range.

Bèlow were men and horses pierced with  
 worms,  
 And slowly quickening into lower forms;  
 By shards and scurf of salt, and scum of  
 dross,

Old splash of rains, and refuse patch'd  
 with moss.

Then some one spake: "Behold! it was  
 a crime

Of sense avenged by sense that wore with  
 time."

Another said: "The crime of sense be-  
 came

The crime of malice, and is equal blame."  
 And one: "He had not wholly quench'd

his power;  
 A little grain of conscience made him  
 sour."

At last I heard a voice upon the slope  
 Cry to the summit, "Is there any hope?"

To which an answer peal'd from that  
 high land,

But in a tongue no man could under-  
 stand;

And on the glimmering limit far with-  
 drawn

God made Himself an awful rose of  
 dawn.

1842.

## BREAK, BREAK, BREAK

BREAK, break, break,

On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!  
 And I would that my tongue could utter  
 The thoughts that arise in me.

O, well for the fisherman's boy,  
 That he shouts with his sister at play!  
 O, well for the sailor lad,  
 That he sings in his boat on the bay!

And the stately ships go on  
 To their haven under the hill;  
 But O for the touch of a vanish'd hand,  
 And the sound of a voice that is still!

Break, break, break,

At the foot of thy crags, O Sea!  
 But the tender grace of a day that is dead  
 Will never come back to me.

1842

## THE POET'S SONG

The rain had fallen, the Poet arose,  
 He pass'd by the town and out of the street;  
 A light wind blew from the gates of the sun,  
 And waves of shadow went over the wheat;  
 And he sat him down in a lonely place,  
 And chanted a melody loud and sweet,  
 That made the wild-swan pause in her cloud,  
 And the lark drop down at his feet.

The swallow stopped as he hunted the fly,  
 The snake slipped under a spray,  
 The wild hawk stood with the down on his beak,  
 And stared, with his foot on the prey;  
 And the nightingale thought, "I have sung many songs,  
 But never a one so gay,  
 For he sings of what the world will be  
 When the years have died away." 1842.

## THE LORD OF BURLEIGH

In her ear he whispers gaily,  
 "If my heart by signs can tell,  
 Maiden, I have watch'd thee daily,  
 And I think thou lov'st me well."  
 She replies, in accents fainter,  
 "There is none I love like thee."  
 He is but a landscape-painter,  
 And a village maiden she.  
 He to lips that fondly falter  
 Presses his without reproof,  
 Leads her to the village altar,  
 And they leave her father's roof.  
 "I can make no marriage present;  
 Little can I give my wife.  
 Love will make our cottage pleasant,  
 And I love thee more than life."  
 They by parks and lodges going  
 See the lordly castles stand;  
 Summer woods, about them blowing,  
 Made a murmur in the land.  
 From deep thought himself he rouses,  
 Says to her that loves him well,  
 "Let us see these handsome houses  
 Where the wealthy nobles dwell."  
 So she goes by him attended,  
 Hears him lovingly converse,  
 Sees whatever fair and splendid  
 Lay betwixt his home and hers;

Parks with oak and chestnut shady,  
 Parks and order'd gardens great,  
 Ancient homes of lord and lady,  
 Built for pleasure and for state.  
 All he shows her makes him dearer;  
 Evermore she seems to gaze  
 On that cottage growing nearer,  
 Where they twain will spend their days.  
 O, but she will love him truly!  
 He shall have a cheerful home;  
 She will order all things duly,  
 When beneath his roof they come.  
 Thus her heart rejoices greatly,  
 Till a gateway she discerns  
 With armorial bearings stately,  
 And beneath the gate she turns,  
 Sees a mansion more majestic  
 Than all those she saw before.  
 Many a gallant gay domestic  
 Bows before him at the door;  
 And they speak in gentle murmur,  
 When they answer to his call,  
 While he treads with footstep firmer,  
 Leading on from hall to hall.  
 And, while now she wonders blindly,  
 Nor the meaning can divine,  
 Proudly turns he round and kindly,  
 "All of this is mine and thine."  
 Here he lives in state and bounty,  
 Lord of Burleigh, fair and free;  
 Not a lord in all the county  
 Is so great a lord as he.  
 All at once the color flushes  
 Her sweet face from brow to chin;  
 As it were with shame she blushes,  
 And her spirit changed within.  
 Then her countenance all over  
 Pale again as death did prove;  
 But he clasp'd her like a lover,  
 And he cheer'd her soul with love.  
 So she strove against her weakness,  
 Tho' at times her spirit sank,  
 Shaped her heart with woman's meekness  
 To all duties of her rank;  
 And a gentle consort made he,  
 And her gentle mind was such  
 That she grew a noble lady,  
 And the people loved her much.  
 But a trouble weigh'd upon her,  
 And perplex'd her, night and morn,  
 With the burthen of an honor  
 Unto which she was not born.  
 Faint she grew, and ever fainter,  
 And she murmur'd, "O, that he  
 Were once more that landscape-painter  
 Which did win my heart from me!"

So she droop'd and droop'd before him,  
 Fading slowly from his side;  
 Three fair children first she bore him,  
 Then before her time she died.  
 Weeping, weeping late and early,  
 Walking up and pacing down,  
 Deeply mourn'd the Lord of Burleigh,  
 Burleigh-house by Stamford-town.  
 And he came to look upon her,  
 And he look'd at her and said,  
 "Bring the dress and put it on her,  
 That she wore when she was wed."  
 Then her people, softly treading,  
 Bore to earth her body, drest  
 In the dress that she was wed in,  
 That her spirit might have rest.

1842.

### THE BEGGAR MAID

Founded on the old ballad of "King Cophetua and the Beggar Maid," which was very popular in its day, and is alluded to by Shakespeare in *Love's Labor's Lost*, *Richard II*, and *Romeo and Juliet*.

HER arms across her breast she laid;  
 She was more fair than words can say;  
 Barefooted came the beggar maid  
 Before the king Cophetua.  
 In robe and crown the king stepped down,  
 To meet and greet her on her way;  
 "It is no wonder," said the lords,  
 "She is more beautiful than day."

As shines the moon in clouded skies,  
 She in her poor attire was seen;  
 One praised her ankles, one her eyes,  
 One her dark hair and lovesome mien.  
 So sweet a face, such angel grace,  
 In all that land had never been.  
 Cophetua sware a royal oath:

"This beggar maid shall be my queen!"

1842.

### LYRICS FROM THE PRINCESS

TEARS, idle tears, I know not what they  
 mean,  
 Tears from the depth of some divine de-  
 spair  
 Rise in the heart, and gather to the  
 eyes,  
 In looking on the happy autumn-fields,  
 And thinking of the days that are no  
 more.

Fresh as the first beam glittering on a  
 sail,  
 That brings our friends up from the  
 underworld,  
 Sad as the last which reddens over one  
 That sinks with all we love below the  
 verge;  
 So sad, so fresh, the days that are no  
 more.

Ah, sad and strange as in dark summer  
 dawns  
 The earliest pipe of half-awaken'd birds  
 To dying ears, when unto dying eyes  
 The casement slowly grows a glimmering  
 square;  
 So sad, so strange, the days that are no  
 more.

Dear as remember'd kisses after death,  
 And sweet as those by hopeless fancy  
 feign'd  
 On lips that are for others; deep as love,  
 Deep as first love, and wild with all re-  
 gret;  
 O Death in Life, the days that are no  
 more!

O SWALLOW, Swallow, flying, flying  
 south,  
 Fly to her, and fall upon her gilded eaves,  
 And tell her, tell her, what I tell to thee.

O, tell her, Swallow, thou that knowest  
 each,  
 That bright and fierce and fickle is the  
 South,  
 And dark and true and tender is the  
 North.

O Swallow, Swallow, if I could follow,  
 and light  
 Upon her lattice, I would pipe and trill,  
 And cheep and twitter twenty million  
 loves.

O, were I thou that she might take me  
 in,  
 And lay me on her bosom, and her heart  
 Would rock the snowy cradle till I died!

Why lingereth she to clothe her heart  
 with love,  
 Delaying as the tender ash delays  
 To clothe herself, when all the woods are  
 green?

O, tell her, Swallow, that thy brood is  
flown;  
Say to her, I do but wanton in the South,  
But in the North long since my nest is  
made.

O, tell her, brief is life but love is long,  
And brief the sun of summer in the North,  
And brief the moon of beauty in the  
South.

O Swallow, flying from the golden  
woods,  
Fly to her, and pipe and woo her, and  
make her mine,  
And tell her, tell her, that I follow thee.

As thro' the land at eve we went,  
And pluck'd the ripen'd ears,  
We fell out, my wife and I,  
O, we fell out, I know not why,  
And kiss'd again with tears.  
And blessings on the falling out  
That all the more endears,  
When we fall out with those we love  
And kiss again with tears!  
For when we came where lies the child  
We lost in other years,  
There above the little grave,  
O, there above the little grave,  
We kiss'd again with tears.

SWEET and low, sweet and low,  
Wind of the western sea,  
Low, low, breathe and blow,  
Wind of the western sea!  
Over the rolling waters go,  
Come from the dying moon, and blow,  
Blow him again to me:  
While my little one, while my pretty one,  
sleeps.

Sleep and rest, sleep and rest,  
Father will come to thee soon;  
Rest, rest, on mother's breast,  
Father will come to thee soon;  
Father will come to his babe in the nest,  
Silver sails all out of the west  
Under the silver moon;  
Sleep, my little one, sleep, my pretty  
one, sleep.

THE splendor falls on castle walls  
And snowy summits old in story;  
The long light shakes across the lakes,  
And the wild cataract leaps in glory.

Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes  
flying,  
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying,  
dying, dying.

O, hark, O, hear! how thin and clear,  
And thinner, clearer, farther going!  
O, sweet and far from cliff and scar  
The horns of Elfland faintly blowing!  
Blow, let us hear the purple glens reply-  
ing,  
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying,  
dying, dying.

O love, they die in yon rich sky,  
They faint on hill or field or river;  
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,  
And grow for ever and for ever.  
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes  
flying,  
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dy-  
ing, dying.

THY voice is heard thro' rolling drums  
That beat to battle where he stands;  
Thy face across his fancy comes,  
And gives the battle to his hands.

A moment, while the trumpets blow,  
He sees his brood about thy knee;  
The next, like fire he meets the foe,  
And strikes him dead for thine and  
thee.

HOME they brought her warrior dead;  
She nor swoon'd nor utter'd cry.  
All her maidens, watching, said,  
"She must weep or she will die."

Then they praised him, soft and low,  
Call'd him worthy to be loved,  
Truest friend and noblest foe;  
Yet she neither spoke nor moved.

Stole a maiden from her place,  
Lightly to the warrior stepped,  
Took the face-cloth from the face;  
Yet she neither moved nor wept.

Rose a nurse of ninety years,  
Set his child upon her knee —  
Like summer tempest came her tears —  
"Sweet my child, I live for thee."

Ask me no more: the moon may draw  
the sea!

The cloud may stoop from heaven and  
take the shape,

With fold to fold, of mountain or of cape;  
But O too fond, when have I answer'd  
thee?

Ask me no more.

Ask me no more: what answer should I  
give?

I love not hollow cheek or faded eye:  
Yet, O my friend, I will not have thee  
die!

Ask me no more, lest I should bid thee live;  
Ask me no more.

Ask me no more: thy fate and mine are  
seal'd;

I strove against the stream and all in  
vain;

Let the great river take me to the main.  
No more, dear love, for at a touch I yield;  
Ask me no more.

1847-1850.<sup>1</sup>

#### IN MEMORIAM A. H. H.

OBITU MDCCCXXXIII<sup>2</sup>

STRONG Son of God, immortal Love,  
Whom we, that have not seen thy face,  
By faith, and faith alone, embrace,  
Believing where we cannot prove;

Thine are these orbs of light and shade;  
Thou madest Life in man and brute;  
Thou madest Death; and lo, thy foot  
Is on the skull which thou hast made.

Thou wilt not leave us in the dust:  
Thou madest man, he knows not why,  
He thinks he was not made to die;  
And thou hast made him: thou art just.

Thou seemest human and divine,  
The highest, holiest manhood, thou.  
Our wills are ours, we know not how;  
Our wills are ours, to make them thine.

Our little systems have their day;  
They have their day and cease to be;  
They are but broken lights of thee,  
And thou, O Lord, art more than they.

We have but faith: we cannot know,  
For knowledge is of things we see;  
And yet we trust it comes from thee,  
A beam in darkness: let it grow.

Let knowledge grow from more to more,  
But more of reverence in us dwell;  
That mind and soul, according well,  
May make one music as before,

But vaster. We are fools and slight;  
We mock thee when we do not fear:  
But help thy foolish ones to bear;  
Help thy vain worlds to bear thy light.

Forgive what seem'd my sin in me,  
What seem'd my worth since I began;  
For merit lives from man to man,  
And not from man, O Lord, to thee.

Forgive my grief for one removed,  
Thy creature, whom I found so fair.  
I trust he lives in thee, and there  
I find him worthier to be loved.

Forgive these wild and wandering cries,  
Confusions of a wasted youth;  
Forgive them where they fail in truth,  
And in thy wisdom make me wise.

1849.<sup>1</sup>

#### III

O Sorrow, cruel fellowship,  
O Priestess in the vaults of Death,  
O sweet and bitter in a breath,  
What whispers from thy lying lip?

"The stars," she whispers, "blindly run;  
A web is woven across the sky;  
From out waste places comes a cry,  
And murmurs from the dying sun;

<sup>1</sup> The first two of these lyrics, included in the body of the work, were published in the original edition, 1847; the others, inserted between the sections of the poem, were first given in the edition of 1850.

<sup>2</sup> Arthur Henry Hallam, Tennyson's closest friend, and betrothed to Tennyson's sister Emily, died at Vienna, September 15, 1833. See the *Life of Tennyson*, I, 49-55, 75-83, 104-108, and 295-327.

<sup>1</sup> It must be particularly noticed that this introductory poem was among the *last written* of those which make up *In Memoriam*. The early parts begin with No. II, or No. III.

On the development of thought and feeling in the poem as a whole, which is fully shown in the parts here given, see Thomas Davidson's *Prolegomena to In Memoriam*, Alfred Gatty's *Key to In Memoriam*, and J. F. Genuing's *In Memoriam*. See also the special Bibliography on page 444.



"And all the phantom, Nature, stands —  
With all the music in her tone,  
A hollow echo of my own, —  
A hollow form with empty hands."

And shall I take a thing so blind,  
Embrace her as my natural good;  
Or crush her, like a vice of blood,  
Upon the threshold of the mind?

## V

I sometimes hold it half a sin  
To put in words the grief I feel;  
For words, like Nature, half reveal  
And half conceal the Soul within.

But, for the unquiet heart and brain,  
A use in measured language lies;  
The sad mechanic exercise,  
Like dull narcotics, numbing pain.

In words, like weeds, I'll wrap me o'er  
Like coarsest clothes against the cold;  
But that large grief which these enfold  
Is given in outline and no more.

## VI

One writes, that "other friends remain,"  
That "loss is common to the race" —  
And common is the commonplace,  
And vacant chaff well meant for grain.

That loss is common would not make  
My own less bitter, rather more.  
Too common! Never morning wore  
To evening, but some heart did break.

O father, wheresoe'er thou be,  
Who pledgest now thy gallant son,  
A shot, ere half thy draught be done,  
Hath still'd the life that beat from thee.

O mother, praying God will save  
Thy sailor, — while thy head is bow'd,  
His heavy-shotted hammock-shroud  
Drops in his vast and wandering grave.

Ye know no more than I who wrought  
At that last hour to please him well;  
Who mused on all I had to tell,  
And something written, something thought;

Expecting still his advent home;  
And ever met him on his way  
With wishes, thinking, "here to-day,"  
Or "here to-morrow will he come."

O, somewhere, meek, unconscious dove  
That sittest ranging golden hair;  
And glad to find thyself so fair,  
Poor child, that waitest for thy love!

For now her father's chimney glows  
In expectation of a guest;  
And thinking "this will please him  
best,"  
She takes a riband or a rose;

For he will see them on to-night;  
And with the thought her color burns;  
And, having left the glass, she turns  
Once more to set a ringlet right;

And, even when she turn'd, the curse  
Had fallen, and her future lord  
Was drown'd in passing thro' the ford,  
Or kill'd in falling from his horse.

O, what to her shall be the end?  
And what to me remains of good?  
To her perpetual maidenhood,  
And unto me no second friend.

## VII

Dark house, by which once more I stand  
Here in the long unlovely street,  
Doors, where my heart was used to beat  
So quickly, waiting for a hand,

A hand that can be clasp'd no more —  
Behold me, for I cannot sleep,  
And like a guilty thing I creep  
At earliest morning to the door.

He is not here; but far away  
The noise of life begins again,  
And ghastly thro' the drizzling rain  
On the bald street breaks the blank day.

## IX

Fair ship, that from the Italian shore  
Saiest the placid ocean-plains  
With my lost Arthur's loved remains,  
Spread thy full wings, and waft him o'er.

So draw him home to those that mourn  
In vain; a favorable speed  
Ruffle thy mirror'd mast, and lead  
Thro' prosperous floods his holy urn.

All night no ruder air perplex  
Thy sliding keel, till Phosphor, bright  
As our pure love, thro' early light  
Shall glimmer on the dewy decks.

Sphere all your lights around, above ;  
 Sleep, gentle heavens, before the prow ;  
 Sleep, gentle winds, as he sleeps now,  
 My friend, the brother of my love ;

My Arthur, whom I shall not see  
 Till all my widow'd race be run ;  
 Dear as the mother to the son,  
 More than my brothers are to me.

## X

I hear the noise about thy keel ;  
 I hear the bell struck in the night ;  
 I see the cabin-window bright ;  
 I see the sailor at the wheel.

Thou bring'st the sailor to his wife,  
 And travell'd men from foreign lands ;  
 And letters unto trembling hands ;  
 And thy dark freight, a vanish'd life.

So bring him ; we have idle dreams ;  
 This look of quiet flatters thus  
 Our home-bred fancies. O, to us,  
 The fools of habit, sweeter seems

To rest beneath the clover sod,  
 That takes the sunshine and the rains,  
 Or where the kneeling hamlet drains  
 The chalice of the grapes of God ;

Than if with thee the roaring wells  
 Should gulf him fathom-deep in brine,  
 And hands so often clasp'd in mine,  
 Should toss with tangle and with shells.

## XI

Calm is the morn without a sound,  
 Calm as to suit a calmer grief.  
 And only thro' the faded leaf  
 The chestnut pattering to the ground ;

Calm and deep peace on this high wold,  
 And on these dews that drench the  
 furze,  
 And all the silvery gossamers  
 That twinkle into green and gold ;

Calm and still light on yon great plain  
 That sweeps with all its autumn  
 bowers,  
 And crowded farms and lessening  
 towers,  
 To mingle with the bounding main ;

Calm and deep peace in this wide air,  
 These leaves that redden to the fall,  
 And in my heart, if calm at all,  
 If any calm, a calm despair ;

Calm on the seas, and silver sleep,  
 And waves that sway themselves in rest,  
 And dead calm in that noble breast  
 Which heaves but with the heaving deep.

## XIII

Tears of the widower, when he sees  
 A late-lost form that sleep reveals,  
 And moves his doubtful arms, and feels  
 Her place is empty, fall like these ;

Which weep a loss for ever new,  
 A void where heart on heart reposed ;  
 And, where warm hands have prest and  
 closed,  
 Silence, till I be silent too ;

Which weep the comrade of my choice,  
 An awful thought, a life removed,  
 The human-hearted man I loved,  
 A Spirit, not a breathing voice.

Come, Time, and teach me, many years,  
 I do not suffer in a dream ;  
 For now so strange do these things  
 seem,  
 Mine eyes have leisure for their tears,

My fancies time to rise on wing,  
 And glance about the approaching  
 sails,  
 As tho' they brought but merchants'  
 bales,  
 And not the burthen that they bring.

## XIV

If one should bring me this report,  
 That thou hadst touch'd the land today  
 And I went down unto the quay,  
 And found thee lying in the port ;

And standing, muffled round with woe,  
 Should see thy passengers in rank  
 Come stepping lightly down the plank,  
 And beckoning unto those they know ;

And if along with these should come  
 The man I held as half-divine,  
 Should strike a sudden hand in mine,  
 And ask a thousand things of home ;

And I should tell him all my pain,  
And how my life had droop'd of late,  
And he should sorrow o'er my state  
And marvel what possess'd my brain;

And I perceived no touch of change,  
No hint of death in all his frame,  
But found him all in all the same,  
I should not feel it to be strange.

## XVIII

'Tis well; 'tis something; we may stand  
Where he in English earth is laid,  
And from his ashes may be made  
The violet of his native land.

'Tis little; but it looks in truth  
As if the quiet bones were blest  
Among familiar names to rest  
And in the places of his youth.

Come then, pure hands, and bear the head  
That sleeps or wears the mask of sleep,  
And come, whatever loves to weep,  
And hear the ritual of the dead.

Ah yet, even yet, if this might be,  
I, falling on his faithful heart,  
Would breathing thro' his lips impart  
The life that almost dies in me;

That dies not, but endures with pain,  
And slowly forms the firmer mind,  
Treasuring the look it cannot find,  
The words that are not heard again.

## XIX

The Danube to the Severn gave  
The darken'd heart that beat no more,  
They laid him by the pleasant shore,  
And in the hearing of the wave.

There twice a day the Severn fills;  
The salt sea-water passes by,  
And hushes half the babbling Wye,  
And makes a silence in the hills.

The Wye is hush'd nor moved along,  
And hush'd my deepest grief of all,  
When fill'd with tears that cannot fall,  
I brim with sorrow drowning song.

The tide flows down, the wave again  
Is vocal in its wooded walls;  
My deeper anguish also falls,  
And I can speak a little then.

## XXI

I sing to him that rests below,  
And, since the grasses round me wave  
I take the grasses of the grave,  
And make them pipes whereon to blow.

The traveller hears me now and then,  
And sometimes harshly will he speak:  
"This fellow would make weakness  
weak,  
And melt the waxen hearts of men."

Another answers: "Let him be,  
He loves to make parade of pain,  
That with his piping he may gain  
The praise that comes to constancy."

A third is wroth: "Is this an hour  
For private sorrow's barren song,  
When more and more the people throng  
The chairs and thrones of civil power?"

"A time to sicken and to swoon,  
When Science reaches forth her arms  
To feel from world to world, and  
charms  
Her secret from the latest moon?"

Behold, ye speak an idle thing;  
Ye never knew the sacred dust.  
I do but sing because I must,  
And pipe but as the linnets sing;

And one is glad; her note is gay,  
For now her little ones have ranged;  
And one is sad; her note is changed,  
Because her brood is stolen away.

## XXIII

Now, sometimes in my sorrow shut,  
Or breaking into song by fits,  
Alone, alone, to where he sits,  
The Shadow cloak'd from head to foot,

Who keeps the keys of all the creeds,  
I wander, often falling lame,  
And looking back to whence I came,  
Or on to where the pathway leads;

And crying, How changed from where it  
ran  
Thro' lands where not a leaf was dumb,  
But all the lavish hills would hum  
The murmur of a happy Pan;

When each by turns was guide to each,  
 And Fancy light from Fancy caught,  
 And Thought leaped out to wed with  
 Thought  
 Ere Thought could wed itself with  
 Speech;

And all we met was fair and good,  
 And all was good that Time could  
 bring.  
 And all the secret of the Spring  
 Moved in the chambers of the blood;

And many an old philosophy  
 On Argive heights divinely sang,  
 And round us all the thicket rang  
 To many a flute of Arcady.

## XXVII

I envy not in any moods  
 The captive void of noble rage,  
 The linnet born within the cage,  
 That never knew the summer woods;

I envy not the beast that takes  
 His license in the field of time,  
 Unfetter'd by the sense of crime,  
 To whom a conscience never wakes;

Nor, what may count itself as blest,  
 The heart that never plighted troth  
 But stagnates in the weeds of sloth;  
 Nor any want-begotten rest.

I hold it true, whate'er befall;  
 I feel it, when I sorrow most;  
 'T is better to have loved and lost  
 Than never to have loved at all.

## XXVIII

The time draws near the birth of Christ  
 The moon is hid, the night is still;  
 The Christmas bells from hill to hill  
 Answer each other in the mist.

Four voices of four hamlets round,  
 From far and near, on mead and moor,  
 Swell out and fail, as if a door  
 Were shut between me and the sound;

Each voice four changes on the wind,  
 That now dilate, and now decrease,  
 Peace and goodwill, goodwill and  
 peace,  
 Peace and goodwill, to all mankind.

This year I slept, and woke with pain,  
 I almost wish'd no more to wake,  
 And that my hold on life would break  
 Before I heard those bells again;

But they my troubled spirit rule,  
 For they controll'd me when a boy;  
 They bring me sorrow touch'd with  
 joy,  
 The merry, merry bells of Yule.

## XXX

With trembling fingers did we weave  
 The holly round the Christmas hearth;  
 A rainy cloud possess'd the earth,  
 And sadly fell our Christmas-eve.

At our old pastimes in the hall  
 We gamboll'd, making vain pretence  
 Of gladness, with an awful sense  
 Of one mute Shadow watching all.

We paused: the winds were in the beech;  
 We heard them sweep the winter land;  
 And in a circle hand-in-hand  
 Sat silent, looking each at each.

Then echo-like our voices rang;  
 We sung, tho' every eye was dim,  
 A merry song we sang with him  
 Last year; impetuously we sang.

We ceased; a gentler feeling crept  
 Upon us: surely rest is meet.  
 "They rest," we said, "their sleep is  
 sweet,"  
 And silence follow'd, and we wept.

Our voices took a higher range;  
 Once more we sang: "They do not die  
 Nor lose their mortal sympathy,  
 Nor change to us, although they change;

"Rapt from the fickle and the frail  
 With gather'd power, yet the same,  
 Pierces the keen seraphic flame  
 From orb to orb, from veil to veil."

Rise, happy morn, rise, holy morn,  
 Draw forth the cheerful day from  
 night:  
 O Father, touch the east, and light  
 The light that shone when Hope was  
 born.

## XXXI

When Lazarus left his charnel-cave,  
And home to Mary's house return'd,  
Was this demanded — if he yearn'd  
To hear her weeping by his grave?

"Where wert thou, brother, those four  
days?"

There lives no record of reply,  
Which telling what it is to die  
Had surely added praise to praise.

From every house the neighbors met,  
The streets were fill'd with joyful sound,  
A solemn gladness even crown'd  
The purple brows of Olivet.

Behold a man raised up by Christ!  
The rest remaineth unreveal'd;  
He told it not, or something seal'd  
The lips of that Evangelist.

## XXXII

Her eyes are homes of silent prayer,  
Nor other thought her mind admits  
But, he was dead, and there he sits,  
And he that brought him back is there.

Then one deep love doth supersede  
All other, when her ardent gaze  
Roves from the living brother's face,  
And rests upon the Life indeed.

All subtle thought, all curious fears,  
Borne down by gladness so complete,  
She bows, she bathes the Saviour's feet  
With costly spikenard and with tears.

Thrice blest whose lives are faithful  
prayers,  
Whose loves in higher love endure;  
What souls possess themselves so pure,  
Or is there blessedness like theirs?

## XXXIII

O thou that after toil and storm  
Mayst seem to have reach'd a purer  
air,

Whose faith has centre everywhere,  
Nor cares to fix itself to form,

Leave thou thy sister, when she prays,  
Her early heaven, her happy views;  
Nor thou with shadow'd hint confuse  
A life that leads melodious days.

Her faith thro' form is pure as thine,  
Her hands are quicker unto good.  
O, sacred be the flesh and blood  
To which she links a truth divine!

See thou, that countest reason ripe  
In holding by the law within,  
Thou fail not in a world of sin,  
And even for want of such a type.

## XL

Could we forget the widow'd hour  
And look on Spirits breathed away,  
As on a maiden in the day  
When first she wears her orange-flower!

When crown'd with blessing she doth rise  
To take her latest leave of home,  
And hopes and light regrets that come  
Make April of her tender eyes;

And doubtful joys the father move,  
And tears are on the mother's face,  
As parting with a long embrace  
She enters other realms of love:

Her office there to rear, to teach,  
Becoming as is meet and fit  
A link among the days, to knit  
The generations each with each;

And, doubtless, unto thee is given  
A life that bears immortal fruit  
In those great offices that suit  
The full-grown energies of heaven.

Ay me, the difference I discern!  
How often shall her old fireside  
Be cheer'd with tidings of the bride,  
How often she herself return,

And tell them all they would have told,  
And bring her babe, and make her boast,  
Till even those that miss'd her most  
Shall count new things as dear as old;

But thou and I have shaken hands,  
Till growing winters lay me low;  
My paths are in the fields I know,  
And thine in undiscover'd lands.

## XLVIII

If these brief lays, of Sorrow born,  
Were taken to be such as closed  
Grave doubts and answers here pro-  
posed,  
Then these were such as men might scorn.



Her care is not to part and prove;  
 She takes, when harsher moods remit,  
 What slender shade of doubt may flit,  
 And makes it vassal unto love;

And hence, indeed, she sports with words,  
 But better serves a wholesome law,  
 And holds it sin and shame to draw  
 The deepest measure from the chords;

Nor dare she trust a larger lay,  
 But rather loosens from the lip  
 Short swallow-flights of song, that dip  
 Their wings in tears, and skim away.

## LIV

O, yet we trust that somehow good  
 Will be the final goal of ill,  
 To pangs of nature, sins of will,  
 Defects of doubt, and taints of blood;

That nothing walks with aimless feet;  
 That not one life shall be destroy'd,  
 Or cast as rubbish to the void,  
 When God hath made the pile complete;

That not a worm is cloven in vain;  
 That not a moth with vain desire  
 Is shrivell'd in a fruitless fire,  
 Or but subserves another's gain.

Behold, we know not anything;  
 I can but trust that good shall fall  
 At last — far off — at last, to all,  
 And every winter change to spring.

So runs my dream; but what am I?  
 An infant crying in the night;  
 An infant crying for the light,  
 And with no language but a cry.

## LV

The wish, that of the living whole  
 No life may fail beyond the grave,  
 Derives it not from what we have  
 The likest God within the soul?

Are God and Nature then at strife,  
 That Nature lends such evil dreams?  
 So careful of the type she seems,  
 So careless of the single life,

That I, considering everywhere  
 Her secret meaning in her deeds,  
 And finding that of fifty seeds  
 She often brings but one to bear,

I falter where I firmly trod,  
 And falling with my weight of cares  
 Upon the great world's altar-stairs  
 That slope thro' darkness up to God,

I stretch lame hands of faith, and grope,  
 And gather dust and chaff, and call  
 To what I feel is Lord of all,  
 And faintly trust the larger hope.

## LVI

"So careful of the type?" but no.  
 From scarp'd cliff and quarried stone  
 She cries, "A thousand types are gone;  
 I care for nothing, all shall go.

"Thou makest thine appeal to me:  
 I bring to life, I bring to death;  
 The spirit does but mean the breath:  
 I know no more." And he, shall he,

Man, her last work, who seem'd so fair,  
 Such splendid purpose in his eyes,  
 Who roll'd the psalm to wintry skies,  
 Who built him fanes of fruitless prayer,

Who trusted God was love indeed  
 And love Creation's final law —  
 Tho' Nature, red in tooth and claw  
 With ravine, shriek'd against his creed —

Who loved, who suffer'd countless ills,  
 Who battled for the True, the Just,  
 Be blown about the desert dust,  
 Or seal'd within the iron hills?

No more? A monster then, a dream,  
 A discord. Dragons of the prime,  
 That tare each other in their slime,  
 Were mellow music match'd with him.

O life as futile, then, as frail!  
 O for thy voice to soothe and bless!  
 What hope of answer, or redress?  
 Behind the veil, behind the veil.

## LVII

Peace; come away: the song of woe  
 Is after all an earthly song.  
 Peace; come away: we do him wrong  
 To sing so wildly: let us go.

Come; let us go: your cheeks are pale;  
 But half my life I leave behind.  
 Methinks my friend is richly shrined;  
 But I shall pass, my work will fail.

Yet in these ears, till hearing dies,  
 One set slow bell will seem to toll  
 The passing of the sweetest soul  
 That ever look'd with human eyes.

I hear it now, and o'er and o'er,  
 Eternal greetings to the dead;  
 And "Ave, Ave, Ave," said,  
 "Adieu, adieu," for evermore.

## LVIII

In those sad words I took farewell.  
 Like echoes in sepulchral halls,  
 As drop by drop the water falls  
 In vaults and catacombs, they fell;

And, falling, idly broke the peace  
 Of hearts that beat from day to day,  
 Half-conscious of their dying clay,  
 And those cold crypts where they shall  
 cease.

The high Muse answer'd: "Wherefore  
 grieve  
 Thy brethren with a fruitless tear?  
 Abide a little longer here,  
 And thou shalt take a nobler leave."

## LXIV

Dost thou look back on what hath been,  
 As some divinely gifted man,  
 Whose life in low estate began  
 And on a simple village green;

Who breaks his birth's invidious bar,  
 And grasps the skirts of happy chance,  
 And breasts the blows of circumstance,  
 And grapples with his evil star;

Who makes by force his merit known  
 And lives to clutch the golden keys,  
 To mould a mighty state's decrees,  
 And shape the whisper of the throne;

And moving up from high to higher,  
 Becomes on Fortune's crowning slope  
 The pillar of a people's hope,  
 The center of a world's desire;

Yet feels, as in a pensive dream,  
 When all his active powers are still,  
 A distant dearness in the hill,  
 A secret sweetness in the stream,

The limit of his narrower fate,  
 While yet beside its vocal springs  
 He play'd at counsellors and kings  
 With one that was his earliest mate;

Who ploughs with pain his native lea  
 And reaps the labor of his hands,  
 Or in the furrow musing stands:  
 "Does my old friend remember me?"

## LXXII

When on my bed the moonlight falls,  
 I know that in thy place of rest  
 By that broad water of the west  
 There comes a glory on the walls:

Thy marble bright in dark appears,  
 As slowly steals a silver flame  
 Along the letters of thy name,  
 And o'er the number of thy years.

The mystic glory swims away,  
 From off my bed the moonlight dies;  
 And closing eaves of wearied eyes  
 I sleep till dusk is dipt in gray;

And then I know the mist is drawn  
 A lucid veil from coast to coast,  
 And in the dark church like a ghost  
 Thy tablet glimmers in the dawn.

## LXXIV

As sometimes in a dead man's face,  
 To those that watch it more and more.  
 A likeness, hardly seen before,  
 Comes out — to some one of his race;

So, dearest, now thy brows are cold,  
 I see thee what thou art, and know  
 Thy likeness to the wise below,  
 Thy kindred with the great of old.

But there is more than I can see,  
 And what I see I leave unsaid,  
 Nor speak it, knowing Death has made  
 His darkness beautiful with thee.

## LXXVIII

Again at Christmas did we weave  
 The holly round the Christmas hearth;  
 The silent snow possess'd the earth,  
 And calmly fell our Christmas-eve.

The yule-clog sparkled keen with frost,  
 No wing of wind the region swept,  
 But over all things brooding slept  
 The quiet sense of something lost.

As in the winters left behind,  
 Again our ancient games had place,  
 The mimic picture's breathing grace,  
 And dance and song and hoodman-blind

Who show'd a token of distress?  
 No single tear, no mark of pain —  
 O sorrow, then can sorrow wane?  
 O grief, can grief be changed to less?

O last regret, regret can die!  
 No — mixed with all this mystic frame,  
 Her deep relations are the same,  
 But with long use her tears are dry.

## LXXXIII

Dip down upon the northern shore,  
 O sweet new-year delaying long;  
 Thou doest expectant Nature wrong;  
 Delaying long, delay no more.

What stays thee from the clouded noons,  
 Thy sweetness from its proper place;  
 Can trouble live with April days,  
 Or sadness in the summer moons?

Bring orchis, bring the foxglove spire,  
 The little speedwell's darling blue,  
 Deep tulips dash'd with fiery dew,  
 Laburnums, dropping-wells of fire.

O thou, new-year, delaying long,  
 Delayest the sorrow in my blood,  
 That longs to burst a frozen bud  
 And flood a fresher throat with song.

## LXXXV

This truth came borne with bier and pall,  
 I felt it, when I sorrow'd most,  
 'T is better to have loved and lost,  
 Than never to have loved at all —

O true in word, and tried in deed,  
 Demanding, so to bring relief  
 To this which is our common grief,  
 What kind of life is that I lead;

And whether trust in things above  
 Be dimm'd of sorrow, or sustain'd;  
 And whether love for him have drain'd  
 My capabilities of love;

Your words have virtue such as draws  
 A faithful answer from the breast,  
 Thro' light reproaches, half expressed  
 And loyal unto kindly laws.

My blood an even tenor kept,  
 Till on mine ear this message falls,  
 That in Vienna's fatal walls  
 God's finger touch'd him, and he slept.

The great Intelligences fair  
 That range above our mortal state,  
 In circle round the blessed gate,  
 Received and gave him welcome there

And led him thro' the blissful climes,  
 And show'd him in the fountain fresh  
 All knowledge that the sons of flesh  
 Shall gather in the cycled times.

But I remain'd, whose hopes were dim,  
 Whose life, whose thoughts were little  
 worth,  
 To wander on a darken'd earth,  
 Where all things round me breathed of  
 him.

O friendship, equal-poised control,  
 O heart, with kindest motion warm,  
 O sacred essence, other form,  
 O solemn ghost, O crowned soul!

Yet none could better know than I,  
 How much of act at human hands  
 The sense of human will demands  
 By which we dare to live or die.

Whatever way my days decline,  
 I felt and feel, tho' left alone,  
 His being working in mine own,  
 The footsteps of his life in mine;

A life that all the Muses deck'd  
 With gifts of grace, that might express  
 All-comprehensive tenderness,  
 All-subtilizing intellect:

And so my passion hath not swerved  
 To works of weakness, but I find  
 An image comforting the mind,  
 And in my grief a strength reserved.

Likewise the imaginative woe,  
 That loved to handle spiritual strife,  
 Diffused the shock thro' all my life,  
 But in the present broke the blow.

My pulses therefore beat again  
 For other friends that once I met;  
 Nor can it suit me to forget  
 The mighty hopes that make us men.

I woo your love: I count it crime  
 To mourn for any overmuch;  
 I, the divided half of such  
 A friendship as had master'd Time;

Which masters Time indeed, and is  
 Eternal, separate from fears.  
 The all-assuming months and years  
 Can take no part away from this;

But Summer on the steaming floods,  
 And Spring that swells the narrow  
 brooks,  
 And Autumn, with a noise of rooks,  
 That gather in the waning woods,  
 And every pulse of wind and wave  
 Recalls, in change of light or gloom,  
 My old affection of the tomb,  
 And my prime passion in the grave.

My old affection of the tomb,  
 A part of stillness, yearns to speak :  
 "Arise, and get thee forth and seek  
 A friendship for the years to come.

"I watch thee from the quiet shore ;  
 Thy spirit up to mine can reach ;  
 But in dear words of human speech  
 We two communicate no more."

And I, "Can clouds of nature stain  
 The starry clearness of the free?  
 How is it? Canst thou feel for me  
 Some painless sympathy with pain?"

And lightly does the whisper fall :  
 "'Tis hard for thee to fathom this ;  
 I triumph in conclusive bliss,  
 And that serene result of all."

So hold I commerce with the dead ;  
 Or so methinks the dead would say ;  
 Or so shall grief with symbols play  
 And pining life be fancy-fed.

Now looking to some settled end,  
 That those things pass, and I shall  
 prove  
 A meeting somewhere, love with love,  
 I crave your pardon, O my friend ;

If not so fresh, with love as true,  
 I, clasping brother-hands, aver  
 I could not, if I would, transfer  
 The whole I felt for him to you.

For which be they that hold apart  
 The promise of the golden hours?  
 First love, first friendship, equal powers,  
 That marry with the virgin heart.

Still mine, that cannot but deplore,  
 That beats within a lonely place,  
 That yet remembers his embrace,  
 But at his footstep leaps no more,

My heart, tho' widow'd, may not rest  
 Quite in the love of what is gone,  
 But seeks to beat in time with one  
 That warms another living breast.

Ah, take the imperfect gift I bring,  
 Knowing the primrose yet is dear,  
 The primrose of the later year,  
 As not unlike to that of Spring.

## LXXXVI

Sweet after showers, ambrosial air,  
 That rollest from the gorgeous gloom,  
 Of evening over brake and bloom  
 And meadow, slowly breathing bare

The round of space, and rapt below  
 Thro' all the dewy tassell'd wood,  
 And shadowing down the horned flood  
 In ripples, fan my brows and blow

The fever from my cheek, and sigh  
 The full new life that feeds thy breath  
 Throughout my frame, till Doubt and  
 Death,  
 Ill brethren, let the fancy fly

From belt to belt of crimson seas  
 On leagues of odor streaming far,  
 To where in yonder orient star  
 A hundred spirits whisper "Peace."

## LXXXVII

I past beside the reverend walls  
 In which of old I wore the gown ;  
 I roved at random thro' the town,  
 And saw the tumult of the halls ;

And heard once more in college fanes  
 The storm their high-built organs make,  
 And thunder-music, rolling, shake  
 The prophet blazon'd on the panes ;

And caught once more the distant shout,  
 The measured pulse of racing oars  
 Among the willows ; paced the shores  
 And many a bridge, and all about

The same gray flats again, and felt  
 The same, but not the same ; and last  
 Up that long walk of limes I past  
 To see the rooms in which he dwelt.

Another name was on the door.  
 I linger'd; all within was noise  
 Of songs, and clapping hands, and boys  
 That crash'd the glass and beat the floor;

Where once we held debate, a band  
 Of youthful friends, on mind and art,  
 And labor, and the changing mart,  
 And all the framework of the land;

When one would aim an arrow fair,  
 But send it slackly from the string;  
 And one would pierce an outer ring,  
 And one an inner, here and there;

And last the master-bowman, he,  
 Would cleave the mark. A willing ear  
 We lent him. Who but hung to hear  
 The rapt oration flowing free

From point to point, with power and grace  
 And music in the bounds of law,  
 To those conclusions when we saw  
 The God within him light his face,

And seem to lift the form, and glow  
 In azure orbits heavenly-wise;  
 And over those ethereal eyes  
 The bar of Michael Angelo?

## LXXXVIII

Wild bird, whose warble, liquid sweet,  
 Rings Eden thro' the budded quicks,  
 O, tell me where the senses mix,  
 O, tell me where the passions meet,

Whence radiate: fierce extremes employ  
 Thy spirits in the darkening leaf,  
 And in the midmost heart of grief  
 Thy passion clasps a secret joy;

And I — my harp would prelude woe —  
 I cannot all command the strings;  
 The glory of the sum of things  
 Will flash along the chords and go.

## XCVI

You say, but with no touch of scorn,  
 Sweet-hearted, you, whose light-blue  
 eyes  
 Are tender over drowning flies,  
 You tell me, doubt is Devil-born.

I know not: one indeed I knew  
 In many a subtle question versed,  
 Who touch'd a jarring lyre at first,  
 But ever strove to make it true;

Perplexed in faith, but pure in deeds,  
 At last he beat his music out.  
 There lives more faith in honest doubt,  
 Believe me, than in half the creeds.

He fought his doubts and gather'd  
 strength,  
 He would not make his judgment blind,  
 He faced the spectres of the mind  
 And laid them; thus he came at length

To find a stronger faith his own,  
 And Power was with him in the night,  
 Which makes the darkness and the  
 light,  
 And dwells not in the light alone,

But in the darkness and the cloud,  
 As over Sinai's peaks of old,  
 While Israel made their gods of gold,  
 Altho' the trumpet blew so loud.

## XCVII

My love has talk'd with rocks and trees;  
 He finds on misty mountain-ground  
 His own vast shadow glory-crown'd;  
 He sees himself in all he sees.

Two partners of a married life —  
 I look'd on these and thought of thee  
 In vastness and in mystery,  
 And of my spirit as of a wife.

These two — they dwelt with eye on eye,  
 Their hearts of old have beat in tune,  
 Their meetings made December June,  
 Their every parting was to die.

Their love has never past away;  
 The days she never can forget  
 Are earnest that he loves her yet,  
 Whate'er the faithless people say.

Her life is lone, he sits apart;  
 He loves her yet, she will not weep,  
 Tho' rapt in matters dark and deep  
 He seems to slight her simple heart.

He thrids the labyrinth of the mind,  
 He reads the secret of the star,  
 He seems so near and yet so far,  
 He looks so cold: she thinks him kind.

She keeps the gift of years before,  
 A wither'd violet is her bliss;  
 She knows not what his greatness is,  
 For that, for all, she loves him more.



For him she plays, to him she sings  
Of early faith and plighted vows;  
She knows but matters of the house,  
And he, he knows a thousand things.

Her faith is fixed and cannot move,  
She darkly feels him great and wise.  
She dwells on him with faithful eyes,  
"I cannot understand; I love."

## CII

We leave the well-beloved place  
Where first we gazed upon the sky;  
The roofs that heard our earliest cry  
Will shelter one of stranger race.

We go, but ere we go from home,  
As down the garden-walks I move,  
Two spirits of a diverse love  
Contend for loving masterdom.

One whispers, "Here thy boyhood sung  
Long since its matin song, and heard  
The low love-language of the bird  
In native hazels tassel-hung."

The other answers, "Yea, but here  
Thy feet have stray'd in after hours  
With thy lost friend among the bowers,  
And this hath made them trebly dear."

These two have striven half the day,  
And each prefers his separate claim,  
Poor rivals in a losing game,  
That will not yield each other way.

I turn to go; my feet are set  
To leave the pleasant fields and farms;  
They mix in one another's arms  
To one pure image of regret.

## CIV

The time draws near the birth of Christ;  
The moon is hid, the night is still;  
A single church below the hill  
Is pealing, folded in the mist.

A single peal of bells below,  
That wakens at this hour of rest  
A single murmur in the breast,  
That these are not the bells I know.

Like strangers' voices here they sound,  
In lands where not a memory strays,  
Nor landmark breathes of other days  
But all is new unhallow'd ground.

## CVI

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,  
The flying cloud, the frosty light:  
The year is dying in the night;  
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.

Ring out the old, ring in the new,  
Ring, happy bells, across the snow.  
The year is going, let him go;  
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

Ring out the grief that saps the mind,  
For those that here we see no more;  
Ring out the feud of rich and poor;  
Ring in redress to all mankind.

Ring out a slowly dying cause,  
And ancient forms of party strife;  
Ring in the nobler modes of life,  
With sweeter manners, purer laws.

Ring out the want, the care, the sin,  
The faithless coldness of the times  
Ring out, ring out my mournful rhymes,  
But ring the fuller minstrel in.

Ring out false pride in place and blood,  
The civic slander and the spite;  
Ring in the love of truth and right,  
Ring in the common love of good.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease;  
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;  
Ring out the thousand wars of old,  
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,  
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;  
Ring out the darkness of the land,  
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

## CVIII

I will not shut me from my kind,  
And, lest I stiffen into stone,  
I will not eat my heart alone,  
Nor feed with sighs a passing wind:

What profit lies in barren faith,  
And vacant yearning, tho' with might  
To scale the heaven's highest height,  
Or dive below the wells of death?

What find I in the highest place,  
But mine own phantom chanting  
hymns?  
And on the depths of death there swims  
The reflex of a human face.

I'll rather take what fruit may be  
 Of sorrow under human skies :  
 'Tis held that sorrow makes us wise,  
 Whatever wisdom sleep with thee.

## CXI

The churl in spirit, up or down  
 Along the scale of ranks, thro' all,  
 To him who grasps a golden ball,  
 By blood a king, at heart a clown, —

The churl in spirit, howe'er he veil  
 His want in forms for fashion's sake,  
 Will let his coltish nature break  
 At seasons thro' the gilded pale;

For who can always act? but he,  
 To whom a thousand memories call,  
 Not being less but more than all  
 The gentleness he seem'd to be,

Best seem'd the thing he was, and join'd  
 Each office of the social hour  
 To noble manners, as the flower  
 And native growth of noble mind;

Nor ever narrowness or spite,  
 Or villain fancy fleeting by,  
 Drew in the expression of an eye  
 Where God and Nature met in light;

And thus he bore without abuse  
 The grand old name of gentleman,  
 Defamed by every charlatan,  
 And soil'd with all ignoble use.

## CXIII

'Tis held that sorrow makes us wise;  
 Yet how much wisdom sleeps with thee  
 Which not alone had guided me,  
 But served the seasons that may rise;

For can I doubt, who knew thee keen  
 In intellect, with force and skill  
 To strive, to fashion, to fulfil —  
 I doubt not what thou wouldst have been :

A life in civic action warm,  
 A soul on highest mission sent,  
 A potent voice of Parliament,  
 A pillar steadfast in the storm,

Should licensed boldness gather force,  
 Becoming, when the time has birth,  
 A lever to uplift the earth  
 And roll it in another course,

With thousand shocks that come and go,  
 With agonies, with energies,  
 With overthrowings, and with cries,  
 And undulations to and fro.

## CXIV

Who loves not Knowledge? Who shall rail  
 Against her beauty? May she mix  
 With men and prosper! Who shall fix  
 Her pillars? Let her work prevail.

But on her forehead sits a fire;  
 She sets her forward countenance  
 And leaps into the future chance,  
 Submitting all things to desire.

Half-grown as yet, a child, and vain —  
 She cannot fight the fear of death.  
 What is she, cut from love and faith,  
 But some wild Pallas from the brain

Of demons? fiery-hot to burst  
 All barriers in her onward race  
 For power. Let her know her place;  
 She is the second, not the first.

A higher hand must make her mild,  
 If all be not in vain, and guide  
 Her footsteps, moving side by side  
 With Wisdom, like the younger child.

For she is earthly of the mind,  
 But Wisdom heavenly of the soul.  
 O friend, who camest to thy goal  
 So early, leaving me behind,

I would the great world grew like thee,  
 Who grewest not alone in power  
 And knowledge, but by year and hour  
 In reverence and in charity.

## CXV

Now fades the last long streak of snow,  
 Now burgeons every maze of quick  
 About the flowering squares, and thick  
 By ashen roots the violets blow.

Now rings the woodland loud and long,  
 The distance takes a lovelier hue,  
 And drown'd in yonder living blue  
 The lark becomes a sightless song.

Now dance the lights on lawn and lea,  
 The flocks are whiter down the vale,  
 And milkier every milky sail  
 On winding stream or distant sea.

Where now the seamew pipes, or dives  
 In yonder greening gleam, and fly  
 The happy birds, that change their  
 sky  
 To build and brood, that live their lives

From land to land; and in my breast  
 Spring wakens too, and my regret  
 Becomes an April violet,  
 And buds and blossoms like the rest.

## CXVIII

Contemplate all this work of Time,  
 The giant laboring in his youth;  
 Nor dream of human love and truth  
 As dying Nature's earth and lime;

But trust that those we call the dead  
 Are breathers of an ampler day  
 For ever nobler ends. They say,  
 The solid earth whereon we tread

In tracts of fluent heat began,  
 And grew to seeming-random forms,  
 The seeming prey of cyclic storms,  
 Till at the last arose the man;

Who throve and branch'd from clime to  
 clime,  
 The herald of a higher race,  
 And of himself in higher place,  
 If so he type this work of time

Within himself, from more to more;  
 Or, crown'd with attributes of woe  
 Like glories, move his course, and  
 show  
 That life is not as idle ore,

But iron dug from central gloom,  
 And heated hot with burning fears,  
 And dipped in baths of hissing tears,  
 And batter'd with the shocks of doom

To shape and use. Arise and fly  
 The reeling Faun, the sensual feast;  
 Move upward, working out the beast,  
 And let the ape and tiger die.

## CXXIII

There rolls the deep where grew the tree.  
 O earth, what changes hast thou seen!  
 There where the long street roars hath  
 been  
 The stillness of the central sea.

The hills are shadows, and they flow  
 From form to form, and nothing  
 stands;  
 They melt like mist, the solid lands,  
 Like clouds they shape themselves and  
 go.

But in my spirit will I dwell,  
 And dream my dream, and hold it true;  
 For tho' my lips may breathe adieu,  
 I cannot think the thing farewell.

## CXXIV

That which we dare invoke to bless;  
 Our dearest faith; our ghastliest  
 doubt;

He, They, One, All; within, without;  
 The Power in darkness whom we guess, —

I found Him not in world or sun,  
 Or eagle's wing, or insect's eye,  
 Nor thro' the questions men may try,  
 The petty cobwebs we have spun.

If e'er when faith had fallen asleep,  
 I heard a voice, "believe no more,"  
 And heard an ever-breaking shore  
 That tumbled in the Godless deep,

A warmth within the breast would melt  
 The freezing reason's colder part,  
 And like a man in wrath the heart  
 Stood up and answer'd, "I have felt."

No, like a child in doubt and fear:  
 But that blind clamor made me wise;  
 Then was I as a child that cries,  
 But, crying, knows his father near;

And what I am beheld again  
 What is, and no man understands;  
 And out of darkness came the hands  
 That reach thro' nature, moulding men.

## CXXV

What ever I have said or sung,  
 Some bitter notes my harp would give,  
 Yea, tho' there often seem'd to live  
 A contradiction on the tongue,

Yet hope had never lost her youth,  
 She did but look through dimmer eyes,  
 Or Love but play'd with gracious lies,  
 Because he felt so fix'd in truth;

And if the song were full of care,  
 He breathed the spirit of the song;  
 And if the words were sweet and strong  
 He set his royal signet there;

Abiding with me till I sail  
 To seek thee on the mystic deeps,  
 And this electric force, that keeps  
 A thousand pulses dancing, fail.

## CXXVI

Love is and was my lord and king,  
 And in his presence I attend  
 To hear the tidings of my friend,  
 Which every hour his couriers bring.

Love is and was my king and lord,  
 And will be, tho' as yet I keep  
 Within the court on earth, and sleep  
 Encompass'd by his faithful guard,

And hear at times a sentinel  
 Who moves about from place to place,  
 And whispers to the worlds of space,  
 In the deep night, that all is well.

## CXXVII

And all is well, tho' faith and form  
 Be sunder'd in the night of fear;  
 Well roars the storm to those that hear  
 A deeper voice across the storm,

Proclaiming social truth shall spread,  
 And justice, even tho' thrice again  
 The red fool-fury of the Seine  
 Should pile her barricades with dead.

But ill for him that wears a crown,  
 And him, the lazar, in his rags!  
 They tremble, the sustaining crags;  
 The spires of ice are toppled down,

And molten up, and roar in flood;  
 The fortress crashes from on high,  
 The brute earth lightens to the sky,  
 And the great Æon sinks in blood,

And compass'd by the fires of hell;  
 While thou, dear spirit, happy star,  
 O'erlook'st the tumult from afar,  
 And smilest, knowing all is well,

## CXXIX

Dear friend, far off, my lost desire,  
 So far, so near in woe and weal,  
 O loved the most, when most I feel  
 There is a lower and a higher;

Known and unknown, human, divine;  
 Sweet human hand and lips and eye;  
 Dear heavenly friend that canst not die,  
 Mine, mine, for ever, ever mine;

Strange friend, past, present, and to be,  
 Loved deeplier, darklier understood;  
 Behold, I dream a dream of good,  
 And mingle all the world with thee.

## CXXX

Thy voice is on the rolling air;  
 I hear thee where the waters run;  
 Thou standest in the rising sun,  
 And in the setting thou art fair.

What art thou then? I cannot guess;  
 But tho' I seem in star and flower  
 To feel thee some diffusive power,  
 I do not therefore love thee less.

My love involves the love before;  
 My love is vaster passion now;  
 Tho' mix'd with God and Nature thou  
 I seem to love thee more and more.

Far off thou art, but ever nigh;  
 I have thee still, and I rejoice;  
 I prosper, circled with thy voice;  
 I shall not lose thee tho' I die.

## CXXXI

O living will that shalt endure  
 When all that seems shall suffer shock,  
 Rise in the spiritual rock,  
 Flow thro' our deeds and make them  
 pure,

That we may lift from out of dust  
 A voice as unto him that hears,  
 A cry above the conquer'd years  
 To one that with us works, and trust,

With faith that comes of self-control,  
 The truths that never can be proved  
 Until we close with all we loved,  
 And all we flow from, soul in soul.

1833-1849. 1850.

TO THE QUEEN<sup>1</sup>

REVERED, beloved — O you that hold  
 A nobler office upon earth  
 Than arms, or power of brain, or birth  
 Could give the warrior kings of old,

Victoria, — since your Royal grace  
 To one of less desert allows  
 This laurel greener from the brows  
 Of him that utter'd nothing base;

And should your greatness, and the care  
 That yokes with empire, yield you time  
 To make demand of modern rhyme  
 If aught of ancient worth be there;

Then — while a sweeter music wakes,  
 And thro' wild March the throstle calls,  
 Where all about your palace-walls  
 The sun-lit almond-blossom shakes —

Take, Madam, this poor book of song;  
 For tho' the faults were thick as dust  
 In vacant chambers, I could trust  
 Your kindness. May you rule us long,

And leave us rulers of your blood  
 As noble till the latest day!  
 May children of our children say,  
 "She wrought her people lasting good;

"Her court was pure; her life serene;  
 God gave her peace; her land reposed;  
 A thousand claims to reverence closed  
 In her as Mother, Wife, and Queen;

"And statesmen at her council met  
 Who knew the seasons when to take  
 Occasion by the hand, and make  
 The bounds of freedom wider yet

"By shaping some august decree  
 Which kept her throne unshaken still,  
 Broad-based upon her people's will,  
 And compass'd by the inviolate sea."  
 1851.

## THE EAGLE

## FRAGMENT

HE clasps the crag with crooked hands,  
 Close to the sun in lonely lands,  
 Ring'd with the azure world, he stands.

<sup>1</sup> Prefixed to the first edition of Tennyson's *Poems* published after he became Poet Laureate.

The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls;  
 He watches from his mountain walls,  
 And like a thunderbolt he falls.

1851.

## COME NOT, WHEN I AM DEAD

COME not, when I am dead,  
 To drop thy foolish tears upon my grave,  
 To trample round my fallen head,  
 And vex the unhappy dust thou wouldst  
 not save.  
 There let the wind sweep and the plover  
 cry;  
 But thou, go by.

Child, if it were thine error or thy crime  
 I care not longer, being all unblest:  
 Wed whom thou wilt, but I am sick of  
 time,  
 And I desire to rest.  
 Pass on, weak heart, and leave me where  
 I lie;  
 Go by, go by.  
 1851.

ODE ON THE DEATH OF THE  
DUKE OF WELLINGTON

## I

BURY the Great Duke  
 With an empire's lamentation;  
 Let us bury the Great Duke  
 To the noise of the mourning of a  
 mighty nation;  
 Mourning when their leaders fall,  
 Warriors carry the warrior's pall,  
 And sorrow darkens hamlet and hall

## II

Where shall we lay the man whom we  
 deplore?  
 Here, in streaming London's central  
 roar.  
 Let the sound of those he wrought for,  
 And the feet of those he fought for,  
 Echo round his bones for evermore.

## III

Lead out the pageant: sad and slow,  
 As fits an universal woe,  
 Let the long, long procession go,  
 And let the sorrowing crowd about it grow,  
 And let the mournful martial music blow;  
 The last great Englishman is low.



## IV

Mourn, for to us he seems the last,  
 Remembering all his greatness in the past,  
 No more in soldier fashion will he greet  
 With lifted hand the gazer in the street.  
 O friends, our chief state-oracle is mute!  
 Mourn for the man of long-enduring  
     blood,

The statesman-warrior, moderate, resolute,

Whole in himself, a common good.

Mourn for the man of amplest influence

Yet clearest of ambitious crime,

Our greatest yet with least pretence,

Great in council and great in war,

Foremost captain of his time,

Rich in saving common-sense,

And, as the greatest only are,

In his simplicity sublime.

O good gray head which all men knew,

O voice from which their omens all men  
     drew,

O iron nerve to true occasion true,

O fallen at length that tower of strength

Which stood four-square to all the winds  
     that blew!

Such was he whom we deplore.

The long self-sacrifice of life is o'er.

The great World-victor's victor will be  
     seen no more.

## V

All is over and done,

Render thanks to the Giver,

England, for thy son.

Let the bell be toll'd.

Render thanks to the Giver,

And render him to the mould.

Under the cross of gold

That shines over city and river,

There he shall rest for ever

Among the wise and the bold.

Let the bell be toll'd,

And a reverent people behold

The towering car, the sable steeds.

Bright let it be with its blazon'd deeds,

Dark in its funeral fold.

Let the bell be toll'd,

And a deeper knell in the heart be knoll'd;

And the sound of the sorrowing anthem  
     roll'd

Thro' the dome of the golden cross;

And the volleying cannon thunder his  
     loss;

He knew their voices of old.

For many a time in many a clime  
 His captain's-ear has heard them boom  
 Bellowing victory, bellowing doom.  
 When he with those deep voices wrought,  
 Guarding realms and kings from shame,  
 With those deep voices our dead captain  
     taught

The tyrant, and asserts his claim  
 In that dread sound to the great name  
 Which he has worn so pure of blame,  
 In praise and in dispraise the same,  
 A man of well-attemper'd frame.

O civic muse, to such a name,

To such a name for ages long,

To such a name,

Preserve a broad approach of fame,

And ever-echoing avenues of song!

## VI

"Who is he that cometh, like an honor'd  
     guest,

With banner and with music, with soldier  
     and with priest,

With a nation weeping, and breaking on  
     my rest?" —

Mighty Seaman, this is he

Was great by land as thou by sea.

Thine island loves thee well, thou famous  
     man,

The greatest sailor since our world began.

Now, to the roll of muffled drums,

To thee the greatest soldier comes;

For this is he

Was great by land as thou by sea.

His foes were thine; he kept us free;

O, give him welcome, this is he

Worthy of our gorgeous rites,

And worthy to be laid by thee;

For this is England's greatest son,

He that gain'd a hundred fights,

Nor ever lost an English gun;

This is he that far away

Against the myriads of Assaye

Clash'd with his fiery few and won;

And underneath another sun,

Warring on a later day,

Round affrighted Lisbon drew

The treble works, the vast designs

Of his labor'd rampart-lines,

Where he greatly stood at bay,

Whence he issued forth anew,

And ever great and greater grew,

Beating from the wasted vines

Back to France her banded swarms,

Back to France with countless blows,

Till o'er the hills her eagles flew  
 Beyond the Pyrenean pines,  
 Follow'd up in valley and glen  
 With blare of bugle, clamor of men,  
 Roll of cannon and clash of arms,  
 And England pouring on her foes.  
 Such a war had such a close.  
 Again their ravening eagle rose  
 In anger, wheel'd on Europe-shadowing  
     wings,  
 And barking for the thrones of kings;  
 Till one that sought but Duty's iron crown  
 On that loud Sabbath shook the spoiler  
     down;  
 A day of onsets of despair!  
 Dash'd on every rocky square,  
 Their surging charges foam'd themselves  
     away;  
 Last, the Prussian trumpet blew;  
 Thro' the long-tormented air  
 Heaven flash'd a sudden jubilant ray,  
 And down we swept and charged and  
     overthrew.  
 So great a soldier taught us there  
 What long-enduring hearts could do  
 In that world-earthquake, Waterloo!  
 Mighty Seaman, tender and true,  
 And pure as he from taint of craven guile,  
 O saviour of the silver-coasted isle,  
 O shaker of the Baltic and the Nile,  
 If aught of things that here befall  
 Touch a spirit among things divine,  
 If love of country move thee there at all.  
 Be glad, because his bones are laid by  
     thine!  
 And thro' the centuries let a people's voice  
 In full acclaim,  
 A people's voice,  
 The proof and echo of all human fame,  
 A people's voice, when they rejoice  
 At civic revel and pomp and game,  
 Attest their great commander's claim  
 With honor, honor, honor, honor to him,  
 Eternal honor to his name.

## VII

A people's voice! we are a people yet.  
 Tho' all men else their nobler dreams  
     forget,  
 Confused by brainless mobs and lawless  
     Powers,  
 Thank Him who isled us here, and  
     roughly set  
 His Briton in blown seas and storming  
     showers,

We have a voice with which to pay the  
     debt  
 Of boundless love and reverence and  
     regret  
 To those great men who fought, and kept  
     it ours.  
 And keep it ours, O God, from brute con-  
     trol!  
 O Statesmen, guard us, guard the eye,  
     the soul  
 Of Europe, keep our noble England  
     whole,  
 And save the one true seed of freedom  
     sown  
 Betwixt a people and their ancient  
     throne,  
 That sober freedom out of which there  
     springs  
 Our loyal passion for our temperate  
     kings!  
 For, saving that, ye help to save mankind  
 Till public wrong be crumbled into dust,  
 And drill the raw world for the march of  
     mind,  
 Till crowds at length be sane and crowns  
     be just.  
 But wink no more in slothful overtrust.  
 Remember him who led your hosts;  
 He bade you guard the sacred coasts.  
 Your cannons moulder on the seaward  
     wall;  
 His voice is silent in your council-hall  
 For ever; and whatever tempests lour  
 For ever silent; even if they broke  
 In thunder, silent; yet remember all  
 He spoke among you, and the Man who  
     spoke;  
 Who never sold the truth to serve the  
     hour,  
 Nor palter'd with Eternal God for power;  
 Who let the turbid streams of rumor  
     flow  
 Thro' either babbling world of high and  
     low;  
 Whose life was work, whose language rife  
 With rugged maxims hewn from life;  
 Who never spoke against a foe;  
 Whose eighty winters freeze with one  
     rebuke  
 All great self-seekers trampling on the  
     right.  
 Truth-teller was our England's Alfred  
     named;  
 Truth-lover was our English Duke!  
 Whatever record leap to light  
 He never shall be shamed.

## VIII

Lo! the leader in these glorious wars  
 Now to glorious burial slowly borne,  
 Follow'd by the brave of other lands,  
 He, on whom from both her open hands  
 Lavish Honor shower'd all her stars,  
 And affluent Fortune emptied all her  
 horn.

Yea, let all good things await  
 Him who cares not to be great  
 But as he saves or serves the state.  
 Not once or twice in our rough island-  
 story

The path of duty was the way to glory.  
 He that walks it, only thirsting  
 For the right, and learns to deaden  
 Love of self, before his journey closes,  
 He shall find the stubborn thistle bursting  
 Into glossy purples, which out-redden  
 All voluptuous garden-roses.

Not once or twice in our fair island-story  
 The path of duty was the way to glory.  
 He, that ever following her commands,  
 On with toil of heart and knees and  
 hands,

Thro' the long gorge to the far light has  
 won

His path upward, and prevail'd,  
 Shall find the toppling crags of Duty  
 scaled

Are close upon the shining table-lands  
 To which our God Himself is moon and  
 sun.

Such was he: his work is done.  
 But while the races of mankind endure  
 Let his great example stand  
 Colossal, seen of every land,  
 And keep the soldier firm, the statesman  
 pure;

Till in all lands and thro' all human  
 story

The path of duty be the way to glory.  
 And let the land whose hearths he saved  
 from shame

For many and many an age proclaim  
 At civic revel and pomp and game,  
 And when the long-illumined cities flame,  
 Their ever-loyal iron leader's fame,  
 With honor, honor, honor, honor to him,  
 Eternal honor to his name.

## IX

Peace, his triumph will be sung  
 By some yet un moulded tongue  
 Far on in summers that we shall not see.

Peace, it is a day of pain  
 For one about whose patriarchal knee  
 Late the little children clung.  
 O peace, it is a day of pain  
 For one upon whose hand and heart and  
 brain

Once the weight and fate of Europe  
 hung.

Ours the pain, be his the gain!  
 More than is of man's degree  
 Must be with us, watching here  
 At this, our great solemnity.

Whom we see not we revere;  
 We revere, and we refrain  
 From talk of battles loud and vain,  
 And brawling memories all too free  
 For such a wise humility  
 As befits a solemn fane:

We revere, and while we hear  
 The tides of Music's golden sea  
 Setting toward eternity,  
 Uplifted high in heart and hope are we,  
 Until we doubt not that for one so true  
 There must be other nobler work to do  
 Than when he fought at Waterloo,  
 And Victor he must ever be.

For tho' the Giant Ages heave the hill  
 And break the shore, and evermore  
 Make and break, and work their will,  
 Tho' world on world in myriad myriads  
 roll

Round us, each with different powers,  
 And other forms of life than ours,  
 What know we greater than the soul?  
 On God and Godlike men we build our  
 trust.

Hush, the Dead March wails in the  
 people's ears;

The dark crowd moves, and there are sobs  
 and tears;

The black earth yawns; the mortal dis-  
 appears;

Ashes to ashes, dust to dust;  
 He is gone who seem'd so great. —  
 Gone, but nothing can bereave him  
 Of the force he made his own  
 Being here, and we believe him  
 Something far advanced in State,  
 And that he wears a truer crown  
 Than any wreath that man can weave  
 him.

Speak no more of his renown,  
 Say your earthly fancies down,  
 And in the vast cathedral leave him,  
 God accept him, Christ receive him!

## HANDS ALL ROUND

FIRST pledge our Queen this solemn night,  
 Then drink to England, every guest;  
 That man's the best Cosmopolite  
 Who loves his native country best.  
 May freedom's oak for ever live  
 With stronger life from day to day;  
 That man's the true Conservative  
 Who lops the moulder'd branch away.  
 Hands all round!  
 God the traitor's hope confound!  
 To this great cause of Freedom drink,  
 my friends,  
 And the great name of England, round  
 and round.

To all the loyal hearts who long  
 To keep our English Empire whole!  
 To all our noble sons, the strong  
 New England of the Southern Pole!  
 To England under Indian skies,  
 To those dark millions of her realm!  
 To Canada whom we love and prize,  
 Whatever statesman hold the helm,  
 Hands all round!  
 God the traitor's hope confound!  
 To this great name of England drink, my  
 friends,  
 And all her glorious empire, round and  
 round.

To all our statesmen so they be  
 True leaders of the land's desire!  
 To both our Houses, may they see  
 Beyond the borough and the shire!  
 We sail'd wherever ship could sail,  
 We founded many a mighty state;  
 Pray God our greatness may not fail  
 Thro' craven fears of being great!  
 Hands all round!  
 God the traitor's hope confound!  
 To this great cause of Freedom drink, my  
 friends,  
 And the great name of England, round  
 and round. 1852.

## DE PROFUNDIS

## THE TWO GREETINGS

## I

OUT of the deep, my child, out of the deep,  
 Where all that was to be, in all that was,  
 Whirl'd for a million æons thro' the vast

Waste dawn of multitudinous-eddy  
 light —  
 Out of the deep, my child, out of the  
 deep,  
 Thro' all this changing world of changeless  
 law,  
 And every phase of ever-heightening life,  
 And nine long months of antenatal gloom,  
 With this last moon, this crescent — her  
 dark orb  
 Touch'd with earth's light — thou comest,  
 darling boy;  
 Our own; a babe in lineament and limb  
 Perfect, and prophet of the perfect man;  
 Whose face and form are hers and mine in  
 one,  
 Indissolubly married like our love.  
 Live, and be happy in thyself, and serve  
 This mortal race thy kin so well that men  
 May bless thee as we bless thee, O young  
 life  
 Breaking with laughter from the dark;  
 and may  
 The fated channel where thy motion lives  
 Be prosperously shaped, and sway thy  
 course  
 Along the years of haste and random  
 youth  
 Unshatter'd; then full-current thro' full  
 man;  
 And last in kindly curves, with gentlest  
 fall,  
 By quiet fields, a slowly-dying power,  
 To that last deep where we and thou are  
 still.

## II

## I

Out of the deep, my child, out of the  
 deep,  
 From that great deep, before our world  
 begins,  
 Whereon the Spirit of God moves as he  
 will —  
 Out of the deep, my child, out of the  
 deep,  
 From that true world within the world we  
 see,  
 Whereof our world is but the bounding  
 shore —  
 Out of the deep, Spirit, out of the deep,  
 With this ninth moon, that sends the  
 hidden sun  
 Down yon dark sea, thou comest, darling  
 boy.

## II

For in the world which is not ours They  
 said,  
 "Let us make man," and that which  
 should be man,  
 From that one light no man can look  
 upon,  
 Drew to this shore lit by the suns and  
 moons  
 And all the shadows. O dear Spirit, half-  
 lost  
 In thine own shadow and this fleshly sign  
 That thou art thou — who wailest being  
 born  
 And banish'd into mystery, and the pain  
 Of this divisible-indivisible world  
 Among the numerable-innumerable  
 Sun, sun, and sun, thro' finite-infinite  
 space  
 In finite-infinite Time — our mortal veil  
 And shatter'd phantom of that infinite  
 One,  
 Who made thee unconceivably Thyself  
 Out of His whole World-self and all in  
 all —  
 Live thou! and of the grain and husk, the  
 grape  
 And ivy-berry, choose; and still depart  
 From death to death thro' life and life,  
 and find  
 Nearer and ever nearer Him, who wrought  
 Not matter, nor the finite-infinite,  
 But this main-miracle, that thou art thou,  
 With power on thine own act and on the  
 world. 1852. 1880.

### THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE<sup>1</sup>

HALF a league, half a league,  
 Half a league onward,  
 All in the valley of Death  
 Rode the six hundred.  
 "Forward the Light Brigade!  
 Charge for the guns!" he said.  
 Into the valley of Death  
 Rode the six hundred.

"Forward, the Light Brigade!"  
 Was there a man dismay'd?

<sup>1</sup> "On Dec. 2d he wrote the *Charge of the Light Brigade* in a few minutes, after reading the description in the *Times* in which occurred the phrase 'some one had blundered,' and this was the origin of the metre of his poem." (*Life of Tennyson*, I, 381.)

Not tho' the soldier knew  
 Some one had blunder'd.  
 Theirs not to make reply,  
 Theirs not to reason why,  
 Theirs but to do and die.  
 Into the valley of Death  
 Rode the six hundred.

Cannon to right of them,  
 Cannon to left of them,  
 Cannon in front of them  
 Volley'd and thunder'd;  
 Storm'd at with shot and shell,  
 Boldly they rode and well,  
 Into the jaws of Death,  
 Into the mouth of hell  
 Rode the six hundred.

Flash'd all their sabres bare,  
 Flash'd as they turn'd in air  
 Sabring the gunners there,  
 Charging an army, while  
 All the world wonder'd.  
 Plunged in the battery-smoke  
 Right thro' the line they broke;  
 Cossack and Russian  
 Reel'd from the sabre-stroke  
 Shatter'd and sunder'd.  
 Then they rode back, but not  
 Not the six hundred.

Cannon to right of them  
 Cannon to left of them,  
 Cannon behind them  
 Volley'd and thunder'd;  
 Storm'd at with shot and shell,  
 While horse and hero fell,  
 They that had fought so well  
 Came thro' the jaws of Death,  
 Back from the mouth of hell,  
 All that was left of them,  
 Left of six hundred.

When can their glory fade?  
 O the wild charge they made!  
 All the world wonder'd.  
 Honor the charge they made!  
 Honor the Light Brigade,  
 Noble six hundred!

December 9, 1854.

### THE BROOK

I COME from haunts of coot and hern,  
 I make a sudden sally,  
 And sparkle out among the fern,  
 To bicker down a valley.



By thirty hills I hurry down,  
Or slip between the ridges,  
By twenty thorps, a little town,  
And half a hundred bridges.

Till last by Philip's farm I flow  
To join the brimming river,  
For men may come and men may go,  
But I go on forever.

I chatter over stony ways,  
In little sharps and trebles,  
I bubble into eddying bays,  
I babble on the pebbles.

With many a curve my banks I fret  
By many a field and fallow,  
And many a fairy foreland set  
With willow-weed and mallow.

I chatter, chatter, as I flow  
To join the brimming river,  
For men may come and men may go,  
But I go on for ever.

I wind about, and in and out,  
With here a blossom sailing,  
And here and there a lusty trout,  
And here and there a grayling,

And here and there a foamy flake  
Upon me, as I travel  
With many a silvery water-break  
Above the golden gravel,

And draw them all along, and flow  
To join the brimming river,  
For men may come and men may go,  
But I go on for ever.

I steal by lawns and grassy plots,  
I slide by hazel covers;  
I move the sweet forget-me-nots  
That grow for happy lovers.

I slip, I slide, I gloom, I glance,  
Among my skimming swallows;  
I make the netted sunbeam dance  
Against my sandy shallows.

I murmur under moon and stars  
In brambly wildernesses;  
I linger by my shingly bars,  
I loiter round my cresses;

And out again I curve and flow  
To join the brimming river,  
For men may come and men may go,  
But I go on forever. 1855.

LYRICS FROM MAUD<sup>1</sup>

## PART I

## V

A VOICE by the cedar tree  
In the meadow under the Hall!  
She is singing an air that is known to me,  
A passionate ballad gallant and gay,  
A martial song like a trumpet's call!  
Singing alone in the morning of life,  
In the happy morning of life and of May,  
Singing of men that in battle array,  
Ready in heart and ready in hand,  
March with banner and bugle and fife  
To the death, for their native land.

Maud with her exquisite face,  
And wild voice pealing up to the sunny  
sky,  
And feet like sunny gems on an English  
green,  
Maud in the light of her youth and her  
grace,  
Singing of Death, and of Honor that  
cannot die,  
Till I well could weep for a time so sordid  
and mean,  
And myself so languid and base.

Silence, beautiful voice!  
Be still, for you only trouble the mind  
With a joy in which I cannot rejoice,  
A glory I shall not find.  
Still! I will hear you no more,  
For your sweetness hardly leaves me a  
choice  
But to move to the meadow and fall before  
Her feet on the meadow grass, and adore,  
Not her, who is neither courtly nor kind,  
Not her, not her, but a voice.

## XI

O, LET the solid ground  
Not fail beneath my feet  
Before my life has found  
What some have found so sweet!  
Then let come what come may,  
What matter if I go mad,  
I shall have had my day.

Let the sweet heavens endure,  
Not close and darken above me  
Before I am quite quite sure  
That there is one to love me!

<sup>1</sup> See the *Life of Tennyson*, I, 393-406.

Then let come what come may  
To a life that has been so sad,  
I shall have had my day.

## XII

BIRDS in the high Hall-garden  
When twilight was falling,  
Maud, Maud, Maud, Maud,  
They were crying and calling.

Where was Maud? in our wood;  
And I — who else? — was with her  
Gathering woodland lilies,  
Myriads blow together.

Birds in our wood sang  
Ringing thro' the valleys,  
Maud is here, here, here  
In among the lilies.

I kiss'd her slender hand,  
She took the kiss sedately;  
Maud is not seventeen,  
But she is tall and stately.

I to cry out on pride  
Who have won her favor!  
O, Maud were sure of heaven  
If lowliness could save her!

I know the way she went  
Home with her maiden posy,  
For her feet have touch'd the meadows  
And left the daisies rosy.

Birds in the high Hall-garden  
Were crying and calling to her,  
Where is Maud, Maud, Maud?  
One is come to woo her.

Look, a horse at the door,  
And little King Charley snarling!  
Go back, my lord, across the moor,  
You are not her darling.

## XVII

Go not, happy day,  
From the shining fields,  
Go not, happy day,  
Till the maiden yields.  
Rosy is the West,  
Rosy is the South,  
Roses are her cheeks,  
And a rose her mouth.

When the happy Yes  
Falters from her lips,  
Pass and blush the news  
Over glowing ships;  
Over blowing seas,  
Over seas at rest,  
Pass the happy news,  
Blush it thro' the West;  
Till the red man dance  
By his red cedar-tree,  
And the red man's babe  
Leap, beyond the sea.  
Blush from West so East,  
Blush from East to West,  
Till the West is East  
Blush it thro' the West.  
Rosy is the West,  
Rosy is the South,  
Roses are her cheeks,  
And a rose her mouth.

## XVIII

I HAVE led her home, my love, my only  
friend.

There is none like her, none.  
And never yet so warmly ran my blood  
And sweetly, on and on,  
Calming itself to the long-wish'd-for end,  
Full to the banks, close on the promised  
good.

None like her, none.  
Just now the dry-tongued laurels' pattering  
ing talk  
Seem'd her light foot along the garden  
walk,  
And shook my heart to think she comes  
once more.  
But even then I heard her close the door;  
The gates of heaven are closed, and she  
is gone.

There is none like her, none,  
Nor will be when our summers have de-  
ceased.

O, art thou sighing for Lebanon  
In the long breeze that streams to thy  
delicious East,  
Sighing for Lebanon,  
Dark cedar, tho' thy limbs have here in-  
creased,  
Upon a pastoral slope as fair,  
And looking to the South and fed  
With honey'd rain and delicate air,  
And haunted by the starry head

Of her whose gentle will has changed my  
fate,  
And made my life a perfumed altar-  
flame :  
And over whom thy darkness must have  
spread  
With such delight as theirs of old, thy  
great  
Forefathers of the thornless garden, there  
Shadowing the snow-limb'd Eve from  
whom she came?

Here will I lie, while these long branches  
sway,  
And you fair stars that crown a happy  
day  
Go in and out as if at merry play,  
Who am no more so all forlorn  
As when it seem'd far better to be born  
To labor and the mattock-harden'd hand  
Than nursed at ease and brought to  
understand  
A sad astrology, the boundless plan  
That makes you tyrants in your iron  
skies,  
Innumerable, pitiless, passionless eyes,  
Cold fires, yet with power to burn and  
brand  
His nothingness into man.  
But now shine on, and what care I  
Who in this stormy gulf have found a  
pearl  
The countercharm of space and hollow  
sky,  
And do accept my madness, and would  
die  
To save from some slight shame one  
simple girl? —

Would die, for sullen-seeming Death  
may give  
More life to Love than is or ever was  
In our low world, where yet 't is sweet to  
live.  
Let no one ask me how it came to pass;  
It seems that I am happy, that to me  
A livelier emerald twinkles in the grass,  
A purer sapphire melts into the sea.

Not die, but live a life of truest breath,  
And teach true life to fight with mortal  
wrongs.  
O, why should Love, like men in drink-  
ing songs,  
Spice his fair banquet with the dust of  
death?

Make answer, Maud my bliss,  
Maud made my Maud by that long loving  
kiss,  
Life of my life, wilt thou not answer this?  
"The dusky strand of Death inwoven  
here  
With dear Love's tie, makes Love himself  
more dear."

Is that enchanted moan only the swell  
Of the long waves that roll in yonder bay?  
And hark the clock within, the silver  
knell  
Of twelve sweet hours that past in bridal  
white,  
And died to live, long as my pulses play;  
But now by this my love has closed her  
sight,  
And given false death her hand, and  
stolen away  
To dreamful wastes where footless fancies  
dwell  
Among the fragments of the golden day.  
May nothing there her maiden grace  
affright!  
Dear heart, I feel with thee the drowsy  
spell.  
My bride to be, my evermore delight,  
My own heart's heart, my ownest own,  
farewell;  
It is but for a little space I go.  
And ye meanwhile far over moor and  
fell  
Beat to the noiseless music of the night!  
Has our whole earth gone nearer to the  
glow  
Of your soft splendors that you look so  
bright?  
I have climb'd nearer out of lonely hell.  
Beat, happy stars, timing with things  
below,  
Beat with my heart more blest than heart  
can tell,  
Blest, but for some dark undercurrent  
woe  
That seems to draw — but it shall not be  
so;  
Let all be well, be well.

## XXI

RIVULET crossing my ground,  
And bringing me down from the Hall  
This garden-rose that I found,  
Forgetful of Maud and me,  
And lost in trouble and moving round

Here at the head of a tinkling fall,  
 And trying to pass to the sea;  
 O rivulet, born at the Hall,  
 My Maud has sent it by thee —  
 If I read her sweet will right —  
 On a blushing mission to me,  
 Saying in odor and color, "Ah, be  
 Among the roses to-night."

## XXII

COME into the garden, Maud,  
 For the black bat, night, has flown,  
 Come into the garden, Maud,  
 I am here at the gate alone;  
 And the woodbine spices are wafted  
 abroad,  
 And the musk of the rose is blown.

For a breeze of morning moves,  
 And the planet of love is on high,  
 Beginning to faint in the light that she  
 loves  
 On a bed of daffodil sky,  
 To faint in the light of the sun she loves  
 To faint in his light, and to die.

All night have the roses heard  
 The flute, violin, bassoon;  
 All night has the casement jessamine  
 stirr'd  
 To the dancers dancing in tune;  
 Till a silence fell with the waking bird,  
 And a hush with the setting moon.

I said to the lily, "There is but one,  
 With whom she has heart to be gay.  
 When will the dancers leave her alone?  
 She is weary of dance and play."  
 Now half to the setting moon are gone,  
 And half to the rising day;  
 Low on the sand and loud on the stone  
 The last wheel echoes away.

I said to the rose, "The brief night goes  
 In babble and revel and wine.  
 O young lord-lover, what sighs are those,  
 For one that will never be thine?  
 But mine, but mine," so I swear to the  
 rose,  
 "For ever and ever, mine."

And the soul of the rose went into my  
 blood,  
 As the music clash'd in the Hall;  
 And long by the garden lake I stood,  
 For I heard your rivulet fall

From the lake to the meadow and on to  
 the wood,  
 Our wood, that is dearer than all;

From the meadow your walks have left  
 so sweet  
 That whenever a March-wind sighs  
 He sets the jewel-print of your feet  
 In violets blue as your eyes,  
 To the woody hollows in which we meet  
 And the valleys of Paradise.

The slender acacia would not shake  
 One long milk-bloom on the tree;  
 The white lake-blossom fell into the lake  
 As the pimpernel dozed on the lea;  
 But the rose was awake all night for  
 your sake,  
 Knowing your promise to me;  
 The lilies and roses were all awake,  
 They sigh'd for the dawn and thee.

Queen rose of the rosebud garden of girls,  
 Come hither, the dances are done,  
 In gloss of satin and glimmer of pearls,  
 Queen lily and rose in one;  
 Shine out, little head, sunning over with  
 curls,  
 To the flowers, and be their sun.

There has fallen a splendid tear  
 From the passion-flower at the gate,  
 She is coming, my dove, my dear;  
 She is coming, my life, my fate.  
 The red rose cries, "She is near, she is  
 near;"  
 And the white rose weeps, "She is  
 late;"  
 The larkspur listens, "I hear, I hear;"  
 And the lily whispers, "I wait."

She is coming, my own, my sweet;  
 Were it ever so airy a tread,  
 My heart would hear her and beat,  
 Were it earth in an earthy bed;  
 My dust would hear her and beat,  
 Had I lain for a century dead,  
 Would start and tremble under her feet  
 And blossom in purple and red.

## PART II

## II

SEE what a lovely shell,  
 Small and pure as a pearl,  
 Lying close to my foot,

Frail, but a work divine,  
Made so fairly well  
With delicate spire and whorl,  
How exquisitely minute,  
A miracle of design!

What is it? a learned man  
Could give it a clumsy name.  
Let him name it who can,  
The beauty would be the same.

The tiny cell is forlorn,  
Void of the little living will  
That made it stir on the shore.  
Did he stand at the diamond door  
Of his house in a rainbow frill?  
Did he push, when he was uncurl'd,  
A golden foot or a fairy horn  
Thro' his dim water-world?

Slight, to be crush'd with a tap  
Of my finger-nail on the sand,  
Small, but a work divine,  
Frail, but of force to withstand,  
Year upon year, the shock  
Of cataract seas that snap  
The three-decker's oaken spine  
Athwart the ledges of rock,  
Here on the Breton strand!

Breton, not Briton; here  
Like a shipwreck'd man on a coast  
Of ancient fable and fear —  
Plagued with a flitting to and fro,  
A disease, a hard mechanic ghost  
That never came from on high  
Nor ever arose from below,  
But only moves with the moving eye,  
Flying along the land and the main —  
Why should it look like Maud?  
Am I to be overawed  
By what I cannot but know  
Is a juggle born of the brain?

Back from the Breton coast,  
Sick of a nameless fear,  
Back to the dark sea-line  
Looking, thinking of all I have lost;  
An old song vexes my ear,  
But that of Lamech is mine.

For years, a measureless ill,  
For years, for ever, to part —  
But she, she would love me still;  
And as long, O God, as she  
Have a grain of love for me,

So long, no doubt, no doubt,  
Shall I nurse in my dark heart,  
However weary, a spark of will  
Not to be trampled out.

Strange, that the mind, when fraught  
With a passion so intense  
One would think that it well  
Might drown all life in the eye, —  
That it should, by being so overwrought,  
Suddenly strike on a sharper sense  
For a shell, or a flower, little things  
Which else would have been past by!  
And now I remember, I,  
When he lay dying there,  
I noticed one of his many rings —  
For he had many, poor worm — and  
thought,  
It is his mother's hair.

Who knows if he be dead?  
Whether I need have fled?  
Am I guilty of blood?  
However this may be,  
Comfort her, comfort her, all things  
good,  
While I am over the sea!  
Let me and my passionate love go by,  
But speak to her all things holy and  
high,  
Whatever happen to me!  
Me and my harmful love go by;  
But come to her waking, find her asleep,  
Powers of the height, Powers of the deep,  
And comfort her tho' I die!

## IV

O THAT 'twere possible  
After long grief and pain  
To find the arms of my true love  
Round me once again!  
When I was wont to meet her  
In the silent woody places  
By the home that gave me birth,  
We stood tranced in long embraces  
Mixed with kisses sweeter, sweeter  
Than anything on earth.

A shadow flits before me,  
Not thou, but like to thee.  
Ah, Christ, that it were possible  
For one short hour to see  
The souls we loved, that they might tell  
us  
What and where they be!



It leads me forth at evening,  
It lightly winds and steals  
In a cold white robe before me,  
When all my spirit reels  
At the shouts, the leagues of lights,  
And the roaring of the wheels.

Half the night I waste in sighs,  
Half in dreams I sorrow after  
The delight of early skies;  
In a wakeful doze I sorrow  
For the hand, the lips, the eyes,  
For the meeting of the morrow,  
The delight of happy laughter,  
The delight of low replies.

'Tis a morning pure and sweet,  
And a dewy splendor falls  
On the little flower that clings  
To the turrets and the walls;  
'Tis a morning pure and sweet,  
And the light and shadow fleet.

She is walking in the meadow,  
And the woodland echo rings;  
In a moment we shall meet.  
She is singing in the meadow,  
And the rivulet at her feet  
Ripples on in light and shadow  
To the ballad that she sings.

Do I hear her sing as of old,  
My bird with the shining head,  
My own dove with the tender eye?  
But there rings on a sudden a passionate  
cry,

There is some one dying or dead,  
And a sullen thunder is roll'd;  
For a tumult shakes the city,  
And I wake, my dream is fled.  
In the shuddering dawn, behold,  
Without knowledge, without pity,  
By the curtains of my bed  
That abiding phantom cold!

Get thee hence, nor come again,  
Mix not memory with doubt,  
Pass, thou deathlike type of pain,  
Pass and cease to move about!  
'Tis the blot upon the brain  
That *will* show itself without.

Then I rise, the eave-drops fall,  
And the yellow vapors choke  
The great city sounding wide;  
The day comes, a dull red ball  
Wrapt in drifts of lurid smoke  
On the misty river-tide.

Thro' the hubbub of the market  
I steal, a wasted frame;  
It crosses here, it crosses there,  
Thro' all that crowd confused and loud,  
The shadow still the same;  
And on my heavy eyelids  
My anguish hangs like shame.

Alas for her that met me,  
That heard me softly call,  
Came glimmering thro' the laurels  
At the quiet evenfall,  
In the garden by the turrets  
Of the old manorial hall!

Would the happy spirit descend  
From the realms of light and song,  
In the chamber or the street,  
As she looks among the blest,  
Should I fear to greet my friend  
Or to say "Forgive the wrong,"  
Or to ask her, "Take me, sweet,  
To the regions of thy rest?"

But the broad light glares and beats,  
And the shadow flits and fleets  
And will not let me be;  
And I loathe the squares and streets,  
And the faces that one meets,  
Hearts with no love for me.  
Always I long to creep  
Into some still cavern deep,  
There to weep, and weep, and weep  
My whole soul out to thee. 1855.

#### WILL

O, WELL for him whose will is strong!  
He suffers, but he will not suffer long;  
He suffers, but he cannot suffer wrong.  
For him nor moves the loud world's ran-  
dom mock,  
Nor all Calamity's hugest waves con-  
found,  
Who seems a promontory of rock,  
That, compass'd round with turbulent  
sound,  
In middle ocean meets the surging shock,  
Tempest-buffed, citadel-crown'd.

But ill for him who, bettering not with  
time,  
Corrupts the strength of heaven-de-  
scended Will,  
And ever weaker grows thro' acted  
crime,

Or seeming-genial venial fault.  
 Recurring and suggesting still!  
 He seems as one whose footsteps halt,  
 Toiling in immeasurable sand,  
 And o'er a weary sultry land,  
 Far beneath a blazing vault,  
 Sown in a wrinkle of the monstrous hill,  
 The city sparkles like a grain of salt.  
 1855.

## ENID'S SONG

TURN, Fortune, turn thy wheel, and lower  
 the proud;  
 Turn thy wild wheel thro' sunshine,  
 storm, and cloud;  
 Thy wheel and thee we neither love nor  
 hate.

Turn, Fortune, turn thy wheel with smile  
 or frown;  
 With that wild wheel we go not up or  
 down;  
 Our hoard is little, but our hearts are  
 great.

Smile and we smile, the lords of many  
 lands;  
 Frown and we smile, the lords of our own  
 hands;  
 For man is man and master of his fate.

Turn, turn thy wheel above the staring  
 crowd;  
 Thy wheel and thou are shadows in the  
 cloud;  
 Thy wheel and thee we neither love nor  
 hate.  
 From the *Marriage of Geraint*, 1859.

## VIVIEN'S SONG

In love, if love be love, if love be ours,  
 Faith and unfaith can ne'er be equal  
 powers:  
 Unfaith in aught is want of faith in all.

It is the little rift within the lute,  
 That by and by will make the music mute,  
 And ever widening slowly silence all.

The little rift within the lover's lute,  
 Or little pitted speck in garner'd fruit,  
 That rotting inward slowly moulders all.

It is not worth the keeping; let it go:  
 But shall it? answer, darling, answer, no.  
 And trust me not at all or all in all.  
 From *Merlin and Vivien*, 1859.

## ELAINE'S SONG

SWEET is true love tho' given in vain, in  
 vain;  
 And sweet is death who puts an end to  
 pain.  
 I know not which is sweeter, no, not I.  
 Love, art thou sweet? then bitter death  
 must be.  
 Love, thou art bitter; sweet is death to  
 me.  
 O Love, if death be sweeter, let me die.

Sweet love, that seems not made to fade  
 away;  
 Sweet death, that seems to make us love-  
 less clay;  
 I know not which is sweeter, no, not I.

I fain would follow love, if that could be;  
 I needs must follow death, who calls for  
 me;  
 Call and I follow, I follow! let me die.  
 From *Lancelot and Elaine*, 1859.

## GUINEVERE

QUEEN GUINEVERE had fled the court,  
 and sat  
 There in the holy house of Almesbury  
 Weeping, none with her save a little maid,  
 A novice. One low light betwixt them  
 burn'd  
 Blurr'd by the creeping mist, for all  
 abroad,  
 Beneath a moon unseen albeit at full,  
 The white mist, like a face-cloth to the  
 face,  
 Clung to the dead earth, and the land was  
 still.

For hither had she fled, her cause of  
 flight  
 Sir Modred; he that like a subtle beast  
 Lay couchant with his eyes upon the  
 throne,  
 Ready to spring, waiting a chance. For  
 this

He chill'd the popular praises of the  
 King  
 With silent smiles of slow disparagement;  
 And tamper'd with the Lords of the White  
 Horse,  
 Heathen, the brood by Hengist left; and  
 sought  
 To make disruption in the Table Round  
 Of Arthur, and to splinter it into feuds  
 Serving his traitorous end; and all his  
 aims  
 Were sharpen'd by strong hate for Lancelot.

For thus it chanced one morn when all  
 the court,  
 Green-suited, but with plumes that  
 mock'd the May,  
 Had been — their wont — a-maying and  
 return'd,  
 That Modred still in green, all ear and  
 eye,  
 Climb'd to the high top of the garden-  
 wall  
 To spy some secret scandal if he might,  
 And saw the Queen who sat betwixt her  
 best  
 Enid, and lissome Vivien, of her court  
 The williest and the worst; and more  
 than this  
 He saw not, for Sir Lancelot passing by  
 Spied where he couch'd, and as the gar-  
 dener's hand  
 Picks from the colewort a green cater-  
 pillar,  
 So from the high wall and the flowering  
 grove  
 Of grasses Lancelot pluck'd him by the  
 heel,  
 And cast him as a worm upon the way;  
 But when he knew the prince tho' marr'd  
 with dust,  
 He, reverencing king's blood in a bad  
 man,  
 Made such excuses as he might, and these  
 Full knightly without scorn. For in  
 those days  
 No knight of Arthur's noblest dealt in  
 scorn;  
 But, if a man were halt, or hunch'd, in  
 him  
 By those whom God had made full-limb'd  
 and tall,  
 Scorn was allow'd as part of his defect,  
 And he was answer'd softly by the King  
 And all his Table. So Sir Lancelot

To raise the prince, who rising twice or  
 thrice  
 Full sharply smote his knees, and smiled,  
 and went;  
 But, ever after, the small violence done  
 Rankled in him and ruffled all his heart,  
 As the sharp wind that ruffles all day long  
 A little bitter pool about a stone  
 On the bare coast.

But when Sir Lancelot told  
 This matter to the Queen, at first she  
 laugh'd  
 Lightly, to think of Modred's dusty fall,  
 Then shudder'd, as the village wife who  
 cries,  
 "I shudder, some one steps across my  
 grave;"  
 Then laugh'd again, but faintlier, for  
 indeed  
 She half-foresaw that he, the subtle beast,  
 Would track her guilt until he found,  
 and hers  
 Would be for evermore a name of scorn.  
 Henceforward rarely could she front in  
 hall,  
 Or elsewhere, Modred's narrow foxy face,  
 Heart-hiding smile, and gray persistent  
 eye.  
 Henceforward too, the Powers that tend  
 the soul,  
 To help it from the death that cannot die,  
 And save it even in extremes, began  
 To vex and plague her. Many a time for  
 hours,  
 Beside the placid breathings of the King,  
 In the dead night, grim faces came and  
 went  
 Before her, or a vague spiritual fear —  
 Like to some doubtful noise of creaking  
 doors,  
 Heard by the watcher in a haunted house,  
 That keeps the rust of murder on the  
 walls —  
 Held her awake; or if she slept she  
 dream'd  
 An awful dream, for then she seem'd to  
 stand  
 On some vast plain before a setting sun,  
 And from the sun there swiftly made at  
 her  
 A ghastly something, and its shadow flew  
 Before it till it touch'd her, and she  
 turn'd —  
 When lo! her own, that broadening from  
 her feet,

And blackening, swallow'd all the land,  
 and in it  
 Far cities burnt, and with a cry she woke.  
 And all this trouble did not pass but grew,  
 Till even the clear face of the guileless  
 King,  
 And trustful courtesies of household life,  
 Became her bane; and at the last she  
 said:  
 "O Lancelot, get thee hence to thine  
 own land,  
 For if thou tarry we shall meet again,  
 And if we meet again some evil chance  
 Will make the smouldering scandal break  
 and blaze  
 Before the people and our lord the King."  
 And Lancelot ever promised, but re-  
 main'd  
 And still they met and met. Again she  
 said,  
 "O Lancelot, if thou love me get thee  
 hence."  
 And then they were agreed upon a  
 night —  
 When the good King should not be there  
 — to meet  
 And part for ever. Vivien, lurking, heard.  
 She told Sir Modred. Passion-pale they  
 met  
 And greeted. Hands in hands, and eye to  
 eye,  
 Low on the border of her couch they sat  
 Stammering and staring. It was their  
 last hour,  
 A madness of farewells. And Modred  
 brought  
 His creatures to the basement of the tower  
 For testimony; and crying with full  
 voice,  
 "Traitor, come out, ye are trapped at  
 last," aroused  
 Lancelot, who rushing outward lionlike  
 Leapt on him, and hurl'd him headlong,  
 and he fell  
 Stunn'd and his creatures took and bare  
 him off,  
 And all was still. Then she, "The end  
 is come,  
 And I am shamed for ever;" and he  
 said:  
 "Mine be the shame, mine was the sin;  
 but rise,  
 And fly to my strong castle over-seas.  
 There will I hide thee till my life shall end,  
 There hold thee with my life against the  
 world."

She answer'd: "Lancelot, wilt thou hold  
 me so?  
 Nay, friend, for we have taken our fare-  
 wells.  
 Would God that thou couldst hide me  
 from myself!  
 Mine is the shame, for I was wife, and  
 thou  
 Unwedded; yet rise now, and let us fly,  
 For I will draw me into sanctuary,  
 And bide my doom." So Lancelot got  
 her horse,  
 Set her thereon, and mounted on his own,  
 And then they rode to the divided way,  
 There kiss'd, and parted weeping; for  
 he passed,  
 Love-loyal to the least wish of the Queen,  
 Back to his land; but she to Almesbury  
 Fled all night long by glimmering waste  
 and weald,  
 And heard the spirits of the waste and  
 weald  
 Moan as she fled, or thought she heard  
 them moan.  
 And in herself she moan'd, "Too late,  
 too late!"  
 Till in the cold wind that foreruns the  
 morn,  
 A blot in heaven, the raven, flying high,  
 Croak'd, and she thought, "He spies a  
 field of death;  
 For now the heathen of the Northern Sea,  
 Lured by the crimes and frailties of the  
 court,  
 Begin to slay the folk and spoil the land."

And when she came to Almesbury she  
 spake  
 There to the nuns, and said, "Mine  
 enemies  
 Pursue me, but, O peaceful Sisterhood,  
 Receive and yield me sanctuary, nor ask  
 Her name to whom ye yield it till her  
 time  
 To tell you;" and her beauty, grace, and  
 power  
 Wrought as a charm upon them, and  
 they spared  
 To ask it.

So the stately Queen abode  
 For many a week, unknown, among the  
 nuns,  
 Nor with them mix'd, nor told her name,  
 nor sought,  
 Wrapt in her grief, for housel or for shrift,

But communed only with the little maid,  
Who pleased her with a babbling heedless-  
ness

Which often lured her from herself; but  
now,

This night, a rumor wildly blown about  
Came that Sir Modred had usurp'd the  
realm

And leagued him with the heathen, while  
the King

Was waging war on Lancelot. Then she  
thought,

"With what a hate the people and the  
King

Must hate me," and bow'd down upon  
her hands

Silent, until the little maid, who brook'd  
No silence, brake it, uttering "Late! so  
late!

What hour, I wonder, now?" and when  
she drew

No answer, by and by began to hum  
An air the nuns had taught her: "Late,  
so late!"

Which when she heard, the Queen look'd  
up and said,

"O maiden, if indeed ye list to sing,  
Sing, and unbind my heart that I may  
weep."

Whereat full willingly sang the little maid.

"Late, late, so late! and dark the night and  
chill!  
Late, late, so late! but we can enter still.  
Too late, too late! ye cannot enter now.

"No light had we; for that we do repent,  
And learning this, the bridegroom will relent.  
Too late, too late! ye cannot enter now.

"No light! so late! and dark and chill the night!  
O, let us in, that we may find the light!  
Too late, too late! ye cannot enter now.

"Have we not heard the bridegroom is so sweet!  
O, let us in, tho' late, to kiss his feet!  
No, no, too late! ye cannot enter now."

So sang the novice, while full passion-  
ately,

Her head upon her hands, remembering  
Her thought when first she came, wept  
the sad Queen.

Then said the little novice, prattling to  
her:

"O pray you, noble lady, weep no more;  
But let my words — the words of one so  
small,

Who knowing nothing knows but to  
obey,

And if I do not there is penance given —  
Comfort your sorrows, for they do not  
flow

From evil done; right sure am I of that,  
Who sees your tender grace and stateli-  
ness.

But weigh your sorrows with our lord  
the King's,

And weighing find them less; for gone  
is he

To wage grim war against Sir Lancelot  
there,

Round that strong castle where he holds  
the Queen;

And Modred whom he left in charge of  
all,

The traitor — Ah, sweet lady, the King's  
grief

For his own self, and his own Queen  
and realm,

Must needs be thrice as great as any of  
ours!

For me, I thank the saints, I am not  
great;

For if there ever come a grief to me  
I cry my cry in silence, and have done;  
None knows it, and my tears have  
brought me good.

But even were the griefs of little ones  
As great as those of great ones, yet this  
grief

Is added to the griefs the great must bear,  
That, howsoever much they may desire  
Silence, they cannot weep behind a cloud;  
As even here they talk at Almesbury

About the good King and his wicked  
Queen,

And were I such a King with such a  
Queen,

Well might I wish to veil her wickedness,  
But were I such a King it could not be."

Then to her own sad heart mutter'd  
the Queen,

"Will the child kill me with her innocent  
talk?"

But openly she answer'd, "Must not I,  
If this false traitor have displaced his lord,  
Grieve with the common grief of all the  
realm?"

"Yea," said the maid, "that all is  
woman's grief,

That *she* is woman, whose disloyal life  
Hath wrought confusion in the Table  
Round



Which good King Arthur founded, years  
ago,  
With signs and miracles and wonders,  
there  
At Camelot, ere the coming of the  
Queen."

Then thought the Queen within her-  
self again,  
"Will the child kill me with her foolish  
prate?"  
But openly she spake and said to her,  
"O little maid, shut in by nunnery walls,  
What canst thou know of Kings and  
Tables Round,  
Or what of signs and wonders, but the  
signs  
And simple miracles of thy nunnery?"

To whom the little novice garrulously:  
"Yea, but I know; the land was full of  
signs  
And wonders ere the coming of the  
Queen.  
So said my father, and himself was  
knight  
Of the great Table — at the founding of  
it,  
And rode thereto from Lyonesse; and  
he said  
That as he rode, an hour or maybe twain  
After the sunset, down the coast, he  
heard  
Strange music, and he paused, and turn-  
ing — there,  
All down the lonely coast of Lyonesse,  
Each with a beacon-star upon his head,  
And with a wild sea-light about his feet,  
He saw them — headland after headland  
flame  
Far on into the rich heart of the west.  
And in the light the white mermaidens  
swam,  
And strong man-breasted things stood  
from the sea,  
And sent a deep sea-voice thro' all the  
land,  
To which the little elves of chasm and  
cleft  
Made answer, sounding like a distant  
horn.  
So said my father — yea, and further-  
more,  
Next morning, while he past the dim-lit  
woods  
Himself beheld three spirits mad with joy

Come dashing down on a tall wayside  
flower,  
That shook beneath them as the thistle  
shakes  
When three gray linnets wrangle for the  
seed.  
And still at evenings on before his horse  
The flickering fairy-circle wheel'd and  
broke  
Flying, and link'd again, and wheel'd and  
broke  
Flying, for all the land was full of life.  
And when at last he came to Camelot,  
A wreath of airy dancers hand-in-hand  
Swung round the lighted lantern of the  
hall;  
And in the hall itself was such a feast  
As never man had dream'd; for every  
knight  
Had whatsoever meat he long'd for  
served  
By hands unseen; and even as he said  
Down in the cellars merry bloated things  
Shoulder'd the spigot, straddling on the  
butts  
While the wine ran; so glad were spirits  
and men  
Before the coming of the sinful Queen."

Then spake the Queen and somewhat  
bitterly,  
"Were they so glad? ill prophets were  
they all,  
Spirits and men. Could none of them  
foresee,  
Not even thy wise father with his signs  
And wonders, what has fallen upon the  
realm?"

To whom the novice garrulously again:  
"Yea, one, a bard, of whom my father  
said,  
Full many a noble war-song had he sung,  
Even in the presence of an enemy's  
fleet,  
Between the steep cliff and the coming  
wave;  
And many a mystic lay of life and death  
Had chanted on the smoky mountain-  
tops,  
When round him bent the spirits of the  
hills  
With all their dewy hair blown back like  
flame.  
So said my father — and that night the  
bard

Sang Arthur's glorious wars, and sang  
the King  
As wellnigh more than man, and rail'd at  
those  
Who call'd him the false son of Gorlois.  
For there was no man knew from whence  
he came;  
But after tempest, when the long wave  
broke  
All down the thundering shores of Bude  
and Bos,  
There came a day as still as heaven and  
then  
They found a naked child upon the sands  
Of dark Tintagil by the Cornish sea,  
And that was Arthur, and they foster'd  
him  
Till he by miracle was approven King;  
And that his grave should be a mystery  
From all men, like his birth; and could  
he find  
A woman in her womanhood as great  
As he was in his manhood, then, he sang,  
The twain together well might change the  
world.  
But even in the middle of his song  
He falter'd, and his hand fell from the  
harp,  
And pale he turn'd and reel'd, and would  
have fallen,  
But that they stay'd him up; nor would  
he tell  
His vision; but what doubt that he fore-  
saw  
This evil work of Lancelot and the  
Queen?"

Then thought the Queen, "Lo! they  
have set her on,  
Our simple-seeming abbess and her nuns,  
To play upon me," and bow'd her head  
nor spake.  
Whereat the novice crying, with clasp'd  
hands,  
Shame on her own garrulity garrulously,  
Said the good nuns would check her  
gadding tongue  
Full often, "and, sweet lady, if I seem  
To vex an ear too sad to listen to me,  
Unmannerly, with prattling and the tales  
Which my good father told me, check me  
too  
Nor let me shame my father's memory,  
one  
Of noblest manners, tho' himself would  
say

Sir Lancelot had the noblest; and he died,  
Kill'd in a tilt, come next, five summers  
back,  
And left me; but of others who remain,  
And of the two first-famed for courtesy—  
And pray you check me if I ask amiss—  
But pray you, which had noblest, while  
you moved  
Among them, Lancelot or our lord the  
King?"

Then the pale Queen look'd up and  
answer'd her:  
"Sir Lancelot, as became a noble knight,  
Was gracious to all ladies, and the same  
In open battle or the tilting-field  
Forebore his own advantage, and the  
King  
In open battle or the tilting-field  
Forebore his own advantage, and these  
two  
Were the most nobly manner'd men of all;  
For manners are not idle, but the fruit  
Of loyal nature and of noble mind."

"Yea," said the maid, "be manners  
such fair fruit?  
Then Lancelot's needs must be a thou-  
sand-fold  
Less noble, being, as all rumor runs,  
The most disloyal friend in all the world."

To which a mournful answer made  
the Queen:  
"O, closed about by narrowing nunnery-  
walls,  
What knowest thou of the world and all  
its lights  
And shadows, all the wealth and all the  
woe?  
If ever Lancelot, that most noble knight,  
Were for one hour less noble than himself,  
Pray for him that he scape the doom of  
fire,  
And weep for her who drew him to his  
doom."

"Yea," said the little novice, "I pray  
for both;  
But I should all as soon believe that his,  
Sir Lancelot's, were as noble as the  
King's,  
As I could think, sweet lady, yours would  
be  
Such as they are, were you the sinful  
Queen."

So she, like many another babbler, hurt  
Whom she would soothe, and harm'd  
where she would heal;

For here a sudden flush of wrathful heat  
Fired all the pale face of the Queen, who  
cried:

"Such as thou art be never maiden more  
For ever! thou their tool, set on to  
plague

And play upon and harry me, petty spy  
And traitress!" When that storm of  
anger brake

From Guinevere, aghast the maiden rose,  
White as her veil, and stood before the  
Queen

As tremulously as foam upon the beach  
Stands in a wind, ready to break and fly,  
And when the Queen had added, "Get  
thee hence!"

Fled frightened. Then that other left alone  
Sigh'd, and began to gather heart again,  
Saying in herself: "The simple, fearful  
child

Meant nothing, but my own too-fearful  
guilt,

Simpler than any child, betrays itself.  
But help me, Heaven, for surely I repent!  
For what is true repentance but in  
thought—

Not even in inmost thought to think  
again

The sins that made the past so pleasant  
to us?

And I have sworn never to see him more,  
To see him more."

And even in saying this,  
Her memory from old habit of the mind  
Went slipping back upon the golden days  
In which she saw him first, when Lancelot  
came,

Reputed the best knight and goodliest  
man,

Ambassador, to yield her to his lord  
Arthur, and led her forth, and far ahead  
Of his and her retinue moving, they,  
Rapt in sweet talk or lively, all on love  
And sport and tilts and pleasure,—for  
the time

Was maytime, and as yet no sin was  
dream'd,—

Rode under groves that look'd a paradise  
Of blossom, over sheets of hyacinth  
That seem'd the heavens upbreking thro'  
the earth,

And on from hill to hill, and every day

Beheld at noon in some delicious dale  
The silk pavilions of King Arthur raised  
For brief repast or afternoon repose  
By couriers gone before; and on again,  
Till yet once more ere set of sun they saw  
The Dragon of the great Pendragonship,  
That crown'd the state pavilion of the  
King,

Blaze by the rushing brook or silent well.

But when the Queen immersed in such a  
trance,

And moving thro' the past unconsciously,  
Came to that point where first she saw  
the King

Ride toward her from the city, sigh'd to  
find

Her journey done, glanced at him,  
thought him cold,

High, self-contain'd, and passionless, not  
like him,

"Not like my Lancelot"—while she  
brooded thus

And grew half-guilty in her thoughts  
again,

There rode an armed warrior to the doors.  
A murmuring whisper thro' the nunnery  
ran,

Then on a sudden a cry, "The King!"  
She sat

Stiff-stricken, listening; but when armed  
feet

Thro' the long gallery from the outer  
doors

Rang coming, prone from off her seat  
she fell,

And grovell'd with her face against the  
floor.

There with her milk-white arms and  
shadowy hair

She made her face a darkness from the  
King,

And in the darkness heard his armed feet  
Pause by her; then came silence, then a  
voice,

Monotonous and hollow like a ghost's  
Denouncing judgment, but, though  
changed, the King's:

"Liest thou here so low, the child of  
one

I honor'd, happy, dead before thy shame?  
Well is it that no child is born of thee.

The children born of thee are sword and  
fire,

Red ruin, and the breaking up of laws,

The craft of kindred and the godless  
     hosts  
 Of heathen swarming o'er the Northern  
     Sea;  
 Whom I, while yet Sir Lancelot, my right  
     arm,  
 The mightiest of my knights, abode with  
     me,  
 Have everywhere about this land of  
     Christ  
 In twelve great battles ruining over-  
     thrown.  
 And knowest thou now from whence I  
     come — from him,  
 From waging bitter war with him; and  
     he,  
 That did not shun to smite me in worse  
     way,  
 Had yet that grace of courtesy in him  
     left,  
 He spared to lift his hand against the  
     King  
 Who made him knight. But many a  
     knight was slain;  
 And many more and all his kith and kin  
 Clave to him, and abode in his own land.  
 And many more when Modred raised  
     revolt,  
 Forgetful of their troth and fealty, clave  
 To Modred, and a remnant stays with me.  
 And of this remnant will I leave a part,  
 True men who love me still, for whom I  
     live,  
 To guard thee in the wild hour coming  
     on,  
 Lest but a hair of this low head be harm'd.  
 Fear not; thou shalt be guarded till my  
     death.  
 Howbeit I know, if ancient prophecies  
 Have err'd not, that I march to meet my  
     doom.  
 Thou hast not made my life so sweet to  
     me,  
 That I the King should greatly care to  
     live;  
 For thou hast spoilt the purpose of my  
     life.  
 Bear with me for the last time while I  
     show,  
 Even for thy sake, the sin which thou  
     hast sinn'd.  
 For when the Roman left us, and their  
     law  
 Relax'd its hold upon us, and the ways  
 Were fill'd with rapine, here and there a  
     deed

Of prowess done redress'd a random  
     wrong,  
 But I was first of all the kings who drew  
 The knighthood-errant of this realm and  
     all  
 The realms together under me, their  
     Head,  
 In that fair Order of my Table Round,  
 A glorious company, the flower of men,  
 To serve as model for the mighty world,  
 And be the fair beginning of a time.  
 I made them lay their hands in mine and  
     swear  
 To reverence the King, as if he were  
 Their conscience, and their conscience as  
     their King,  
 To break the heathen and uphold the  
     Christ,  
 To ride abroad redressing human wrongs,  
 To speak no slander, no, nor listen to it,  
 To honor his own word as if his God's,  
 To lead sweet lives in purest chastity,  
 To love one maiden only, cleave to her,  
 And worship her by years of noble deeds,  
 Until they won her; for indeed I knew  
 Of no more subtle master under heaven  
 Than is the maiden passion for a maid,  
 Not only to keep down the base in man,  
 But teach high thought, and amiable  
     words  
 And courtliness, and the desire of fame,  
 And love of truth, and all that makes a  
     man.  
 And all this throve before I wedded thee,  
 Believing, 'Lo, mine helpmate, one to  
     feel  
 My purpose and rejoicing in my joy!'

Then came thy shameful sin with Lancelot;  
 Then came the sin of Tristram and Isolte;  
 Then others, following these my mightiest  
     knights,  
 And drawing foul ensample from fair  
     names,  
 Sinn'd also, till the loathsome opposite  
 Of all my heart had destined did obtain,  
 And all thro' thee! so that this life of  
     mine  
 I guard as God's high gift from scathe  
     and wrong,  
 Not greatly care to lose; but rather think  
 How sad it were for Arthur, should he  
     live,  
 To sit once more within his lonely hall,  
 And miss the wonted number of my  
     knights,

And miss to hear high talk of noble deeds  
As in the golden days before thy sin.

For which of us who might be left could  
speak

Of the pure heart, nor seem to glance at  
thee?

And in thy bowers of Camelot or of Usk  
Thy shadow still would glide from room  
to room,

And I should evermore be vexed with thee  
In hanging robe or vacant ornament,  
Or ghostly footfall echoing on the stair.

For think not, tho' thou wouldst not love  
thy lord,

Thy lord has wholly lost his love for thee.  
I am not made of so slight elements.

Yet must I leave thee, woman, to thy  
shame.

I hold that man the worst of public foes  
Who either for his own or children's sake,  
To save his blood from scandal, lets the  
wife

Whom he knows false abide and rule the  
house:

For being thro' his cowardice allow'd  
Her station, taken everywhere for pure,

She like a new disease, unknown to men,  
Creeps, no precaution used, among the  
crowd,

Makes wicked lightnings of her eyes, and  
saps

The fealty of our friends, and stirs the  
pulse

With devil's leaps, and poisons half the  
young.

Worst of the worst were that man he that  
reigns!

Better the King's waste hearth and  
aching heart

Than thou reseated in thy place of light,  
The mockery of my people and their  
bane!"

He paused, and in the pause she crept  
an inch

Nearer, and laid her hands about his feet.  
Far off a solitary trumpet blew.

Then waiting by the doors the war-horse  
neigh'd

As at a friend's voice, and he spake again:

"Yet think not that I come to urge  
thy crimes;

I did not come to curse thee, Guinevere,  
I, whose vast pity almost makes me die  
To see thee, laying there thy golden head,

My pride in happier summers, at my feet.  
The wrath which forced my thoughts on  
that fierce law,

The doom of treason and the flaming  
death,—

When first I learned thee hidden here,—  
is past.

The pang — which, while I weigh'd thy  
heart with one

Too wholly true to dream untruth in  
thee,

Made my tears burn — is also past — in  
part.

And all is past, the sin is sinn'd, and I,  
Lo, I forgive thee, as Eternal God

Forgives! do thou for thine own soul the  
rest.

But how to take last leave of all I loved?  
O golden hair, with which I used to play

Not knowing! O imperial-moulded  
form,

And beauty such as never woman wore,  
Until it came a kingdom's curse with  
thee —

I cannot touch thy lips, they are not  
mine,

But Lancelot's; nay, they never were  
the King's.

I cannot take thy hand; that too is flesh,  
And in the flesh thou hast sinn'd; and

mine own flesh,

Here looking down on thine polluted,  
cries,

'I loathe thee;' yet not less, O Guinevere,  
For I was ever virgin save for thee,

My love thro' flesh hath wrought into my  
life

So far that my doom is, I love thee still.  
Let no man dream but that I love thee

still.

Perchance, and so thou purify thy soul,  
And so thou lean on our fair father Christ,

Hereafter in that world where all are pure  
We two may meet before high God, and  
thou

Wilt spring to me, and claim me thine,  
and know

I am thine husband — not a smaller soul,  
Nor Lancelot, nor another. Leave me

that,

I charge thee, my last hope. Now must I  
hence.

Thro' the thick night I heard the trumpet  
blow.

They summon me their King to lead mine  
hosts



Far down to that great battle in the west,  
 Where I must strike against the man they  
     call  
 My sister's son — no kin of mine, who  
     leagues  
 With Lords of the White Horse, heathen,  
     and knights,  
 Traitors — and strike him dead, and meet  
     myself  
 Death, or I know not what mysterious  
     doom.  
 And thou remaining here wilt learn the  
     event;  
 But hither shall I never come again,  
 Never lie by thy side, see thee no more —  
 Farewell!"

And while she grovell'd at his feet,  
 She felt the King's breath wander o'er her  
     neck,  
 And in the darkness o'er her fallen head  
 Perceived the waving of his hands that  
     blessed.

Then, listening till those armed steps  
     were gone,  
 Rose the pale Queen, and in her anguish  
     found  
 The casement: "peradventure," so she  
     thought,  
 "If I might see his face, and not be seen."  
 And lo, he sat on horseback at the door!  
 And near him the sad nuns with each a  
     light  
 Stood, and he gave them charge about  
     the Queen,  
 To guard and foster her for evermore.  
 And while he spake to these his helm was  
     lower'd,  
 To which for crest the golden dragon clung  
 Of Britain; so she did not see the face,  
 Which then was as an angel's, but she  
     saw,  
 Wet with the mists and smitten by the  
     lights,  
 The Dragon of the great Pendragonship  
 Blaze, making all the night a steam of  
     fire.  
 And even then he turn'd; and more and  
     more  
 The moony vapor rolling round the King,  
 Who seem'd the phantom of a giant in it,  
 Enwound him fold by fold, and made  
     him gray  
 And grayer, till himself became as mist  
 Before her, moving ghostlike to his doom.

Then she stretch'd out her arms and  
     cried aloud,  
 "O Arthur!" there her voice brake sud-  
     denly,  
 Then — as a stream that spouting from a  
     cliff  
 Fails in mid air, but gathering at the base  
 Re-makes itself, and flashes down the  
     vale —  
 Went on in passionate utterance:

"Gone — my lord!  
 Gone thro' my sin to slay and to be slain!  
 And he forgave me, and I could not speak.  
 Farewell? I should have answer'd his  
     farewell.  
 His mercy choked me. Gone, my lord  
     the King,  
 My own true lord! how dare I call him  
     mine?  
 The shadow of another cleaves to me,  
 And makes me one pollution. He, the  
     King,  
 Call'd me polluted. Shall I kill myself?  
 What help in that? I cannot kill my sin,  
 If soul be soul, nor can I kill my shame;  
 No, nor by living can I live it down.  
 The days will grow to weeks, the weeks  
     to months,  
 The months will add themselves and  
     make the years,  
 The years will roll into the centuries,  
 And mine will ever be a name of scorn.  
 I must not dwell on that defeat of fame.  
 Let the world be; that is but of the  
     world —  
 What else? what hope? I think there  
     was a hope,  
 Except he mock'd me when he spake of  
     hope;  
 His hope he call'd it; but he never mocks,  
 For mockery is the fume of little hearts.  
 And blessed be the King, who hath for-  
     given  
 My wickedness to him, and left me hope  
 That in mine own heart I can live down  
     sin  
 And be his mate hereafter in the heavens  
 Before high God! Ah great and gentle  
     lord,  
 Who wast, as is the conscience of a saint  
 Among his warring senses, to thy  
     knights —  
 To whom my false voluptuous pride, that  
     took  
 Full easily all impressions from below,

Would not look up, or half-despised the  
 height  
 To which I would not or I could not  
 climb —  
 I thought I could not breathe in that  
 fine air,  
 That pure severity of perfect light —  
 I yearn'd for warmth and color which I  
 found  
 In Lancelot — now I see thee what thou  
 art,  
 Thou art the highest and most human too,  
 Not Lancelot, nor another. Is there  
 none  
 Will tell the King I love him tho' so late?  
 Now — ere he goes to the great battle?  
 none!  
 Myself must tell him in that purer life,  
 But now it were too daring. Ah my God,  
 What might I not have made of thy fair  
 world,  
 Had I but loved thy highest creature  
 here?  
 It was my duty to have loved the highest;  
 It surely was my profit had I known;  
 It would have been my pleasure had I  
 seen.  
 We needs must love the highest when we  
 see it,  
 Not Lancelot, nor another."

Here her hand

Grasp'd made her veil her eyes. She  
 look'd and saw  
 The novice, weeping, suppliant, and said  
 to her,  
 "Yea, little maid, for am I not forgiven?"  
 Then glancing up beheld the holy nuns  
 All round her, weeping; and her heart  
 was loosed  
 Within her, and she wept with these and  
 said:

"Ye know me then, that wicked one,  
 who broke  
 The vast design and purpose of the King.  
 O, shut me round with narrowing nunnery  
 walls,  
 Meek maidens, from the voices crying,  
 'Shame!'  
 I must not scorn myself; he loves me still.  
 Let no one dream but that he loves me  
 still.  
 So let me, if you do not shudder at me,  
 Nor shun to call me sister, dwell with  
 you;

Wear black and white, and be a nun like  
 you,  
 Fast with your fasts, not feasting with  
 your feasts;  
 Grieve with your griefs, not grieving at  
 your joys,  
 But not rejoicing; mingle with your  
 rites;  
 Pray and be pray'd for; lie before your  
 shrines;  
 Do each low office of your holy house;  
 Walk your dim cloister, and distribute  
 dole  
 To poor sick people, richer in His eyes  
 Who ransom'd us, and haler too than I;  
 And treat their loathsome hurts and heal  
 mine own;  
 And so wear out in alms-deed and in  
 prayer  
 The sombre close of that voluptuous day  
 Which wrought the ruin of my lord the  
 King."

She said. They took her to them-  
 selves; and she  
 Still hoping, fearing. "Is it yet too late?"  
 Dwelt with them, till in time their abbess  
 died.  
 Then she, for her good deeds and her pure  
 life,  
 And for the power of ministration in her.  
 And likewise for the high rank she had  
 borne,  
 Was chosen abbess, there, an abbess,  
 lived  
 For three brief years, and there, an  
 abbess, passed  
 To where beyond these voices there is  
 peace. 1859.

## TITHONUS

THE woods decay, the woods decay and  
 fall,  
 The vapors weep their burthen to the  
 ground,  
 Man comes and tills the field and lies be-  
 neath,  
 And after many a summer dies the swan.  
 Me only cruel immortality  
 Consumes; I wither slowly in thine arms,  
 Here at the quiet limit of the world,  
 A white-hair'd shadow roaming like a  
 dream  
 The ever-silent spaces of the East,

Far-folded mists, and gleaming halls of morn.

Alas! for this gray shadow, once a man—

So glorious in his beauty and thy choice,  
Who madest him thy chosen, that he seem'd

To his great heart none other than a God!

I ask'd thee, "Give me immortality."

Then didst thou grant mine asking with a smile,

Like wealthy men who care not how they give.

But thy strong Hours indignant work'd their wills,

And beat me down and marr'd and wasted me,

And tho' they could not end me, left me maim'd

To dwell in presence of immortal youth,  
Immortal age beside immortal youth,

And all I was in ashes. Can thy love,  
Thy beauty, make amends, tho' even now,

Close over us, the silver star, thy guide,  
Shines in those tremulous eyes that fill with tears

To hear me? Let me go; take back thy gift.

Why should a man desire in any way

To vary from the kindly race of men,

Or pass beyond the goal of ordinance

Where all should pause, as is most meet for all?

A soft air fans the cloud apart; there comes

A glimpse of that dark world where I was born.

Once more the old mysterious glimmer steals

From thy pure brows, and from thy shoulders pure,

And bosom beating with a heart renew'd.

Thy cheek begins to redden thro' the gloom,

Thy sweet eyes brighten slowly close to mine,

Ere yet they blind the stars, and the wild team

Which love thee, yearning for thy yoke, arise,

And shake the darkness from their loosen'd manes,

And beat the twilight into flakes of fire.

Lo! ever thus thou growest beautiful  
In silence, then before thine answer given

Departest, and thy tears are on my cheek.

Why wilt thou ever scare me with thy tears,

And make me tremble lest a saying learnt,

In days far-off, on that dark earth, be true?

"The Gods themselves cannot recall their gifts."

Ay me! ay me! with what another heart

In days far-off, and with what other eyes  
I used to watch—if I be he that watch'd—

The lucid outline forming round thee; saw

The dim curls kindle into sunny rings;  
Changed with thy mystic change, and felt my blood

Glow with the glow that slowly crimson'd all

Thy presence and thy portals, while I lay,

Mouth, forehead, eyelids, growing dewy-warm

With kisses balmier than half-opening buds

Of April, and could hear the lips that kiss'd

Whispering I knew not what of wild and sweet,

Like that strange song I heard Apollo sing,

While Ilion like a mist rose into towers.

Yet hold me not for ever in thine East;

How can my nature longer mix with thine?

Coldly thy rosy shadows bathe me, cold  
Are all thy lights, and cold my wrinkled feet

Upon thy glimmering thresholds, when the steam

Floats up from those dim fields about the homes

Of happy men that have the power to die,

And grassy barrows of the happier dead.  
Release me, and restore me to the ground.

Thou seest all things, thou wilt see my grave;

Thou wilt renew thy beauty morn by morn,

I earth in earth forget these empty courts,

And thee returning on thy silver wheels.

About 1835. 1860.

## THE SAILOR BOY

HE rose at dawn and, fired with hope,  
 Shot o'er the seething harbor-bar,  
 And reach'd the ship and caught the rope,  
 And whistled to the morning star.

And while he whistled long and loud  
 He heard a fierce mermaiden cry,  
 "O boy, tho' thou art young and proud,  
 I see the place where thou wilt lie.

"The sands and yeasty surges mix  
 In caves about the dreary bay,  
 And on thy ribs the limpet sticks,  
 And in thy heart the scrawl shall play."

"Fool," he answer'd, "death is sure  
 To those that stay and those that roam,  
 But I will nevermore endure  
 To sit with empty hands at home.

"My mother clings about my neck,  
 My sisters crying, 'Stay for shame';  
 My father raves of death and wreck,  
 They are all to blame, they are all to blame.

"God help me! save I take my part  
 Of danger on the roaring sea,  
 A devil rises in my heart,  
 Far worse than any death to me."  
 1861.

## MILTON

(ALGAICS)

O MIGHTY-MOUTH'D inventor of harmonies,  
 O skill'd to sing of Time or Eternity,  
 God-gifted organ-voice of England,  
 Milton, a name to resound for ages;  
 Whose Titan angels, Gabriel, Abdiel,  
 Starr'd from Jehovah's gorgeous armories,  
 Tower, as the deep-doomed empyrean  
 Rings to the roar of an angel onset!  
 Me rather all that bowery loneliness,  
 The brooks of Eden mazily murmuring,  
 And bloom profuse and cedar arches  
 Charm, as a wanderer out in ocean,  
 Where some refulgent sunset of India  
 Streams o'er a rich ambrosial ocean isle,  
 And crimson-hued the stately palm-woods  
 Whisper in odorous heights of even.  
 1863.

## THE VOYAGE

WE left behind the painted buoy  
 That tosses at the harbor-mouth;  
 And madly danced our hearts with joy,  
 As fast we fled to the south.  
 How fresh was every sight and sound  
 On open main or winding shore!  
 We knew the merry world was round,  
 And we might sail for evermore.

Warm broke the breeze against the brow,  
 Dry sang the tackle, sang the sail;  
 The lady's-head upon the prow  
 Caught the shrill salt, and sheer'd the gale.

The broad seas swell'd to meet the keel.  
 And swept behind; so quick the run  
 We felt the good ship shake and reel,  
 We seem'd to sail into the sun!

How oft we saw the sun retire,  
 And burn the threshold of the night,  
 Fall from his Ocean-lane of fire,  
 And sleep beneath his pillar'd light!  
 How oft the purple-skirted robe  
 Of twilight slowly downward drawn,  
 As thro' the slumber of the globe  
 Again we dash'd into the dawn!

New stars all night above the brim  
 Of waters lighten'd into view;  
 They climb'd as quickly, for the rim  
 Changed every moment as we flew.  
 Far ran the naked moon across  
 The houseless ocean's heaving field,  
 Or flying shone, the silver boss  
 Of her own halo's dusky shield.

The peaky islet shifted shapes,  
 High towns on hills were dimly seen;  
 We passed long lines of Northern capes  
 And dewy Northern meadows green.  
 We came to warmer waves, and deep  
 Across the boundless east we drove,  
 Where those long swells of breaker sweep  
 The nutmeg rocks and isles of clove.

By peaks that flamed, or, all in shade,  
 Gloom'd the low coast and quivering brine  
 With ashy rains, that spreading made  
 Fantastic plume or sable pine;  
 By sands and steaming flats, and floods  
 Of mighty mouth, we scudded fast,  
 And hills and scarlet-mingled woods  
 Glow'd for a moment as we passed.

O hundred shores of happy climes,  
 How swiftly stream'd ye by the bark.  
 At times the whole sea burn'd, at times  
 With wakes of fire we tore the dark;  
 At times a carven craft would shoot  
 From havens hid in fairy bowers,  
 With naked limbs and flowers and fruit,  
 But we nor paused for fruit nor flowers.

For one fair Vision ever fled  
 Down the waste waters day and night.  
 And still we follow'd where she led,  
 In hope to gain upon her flight.  
 Her face was evermore unseen,  
 And fixed upon the far sea-line;  
 But each man murmur'd, "O my queen,  
 I follow till I make thee mine!"

And now we lost her, now she gleam'd  
 Like Fancy made of golden air.  
 Now nearer to the prow she seem'd  
 Like Virtue firm, like Knowledge fair,  
 Now high on waves that idly burst  
 Like Heavenly Hope she crown'd the  
 sea,  
 And now, the bloodless point reversed,  
 She bore the blade of Liberty.

And only one among us — him  
 We pleased not — he was seldom  
 pleased;

He saw not far, his eyes were dim,  
 But ours he swore were all diseased.  
 "A ship of fools," he shriek'd in spite,  
 "A ship of fools," he sneer'd and wept,  
 And overboard one stormy night  
 He cast his body, and on we swept.

And never sail of ours was furl'd,  
 Nor anchor dropped at eve or morn;  
 We loved the glories of the world,  
 But laws of nature were our scorn.  
 For blasts would rise and rave and cease,  
 But whence were those that drove the  
 sail

Across the whirlwind's heart of peace,  
 And to and thro' the counter gale?

Again to colder climes we came,  
 For still we follow'd where she led;  
 Now mate is blind and captain lame,  
 And half the crew are sick or dead,  
 But, blind or lame or sick or sound,  
 We follow that which flies before;  
 We know the merry world is round,  
 And we may sail for evermore.

1864.

## NORTHERN FARMER

### OLD STYLE

WHEER 'asta bean saw long and mea  
 ligin' 'ere aloan?  
 Noorse? thoort nowt o' a noorse; whöy,  
 Doctor's abean an' agoan;  
 Says that I moant 'a naw moor aale, but  
 I beant a fool;  
 Git ma my aale, fur I beant a-gawin'  
 to break my rule.

Doctors, they knaws nowt, fur a says  
 what 's nawways true;  
 Naw soort o' koind o' use to saay the  
 things that a do.  
 I've 'ed my point o' aale ivry noight sin'  
 I bean 'ere.  
 An' I've 'ed my quart ivry market-noight  
 for foorty year.

Parson 's a bean loikewise, an' a sittin'  
 ere o' my bed.  
 "The Amoighty 's a taakin o' you<sup>1</sup> to  
 'issén, my friend," a said,  
 An' a tow'd ma my sins, an' 's toithe were  
 due, an' I gied it in hond;  
 I done moy duty boy 'um, as I 'a done  
 boy the lond.

Larn'd a ma' bea. I reckons I 'annot  
 sa mooch to larn.  
 But a cast oop, thot a did, 'bout Bessy  
 Marris's barne.  
 Thaw a knaws I hallus voated wi' Squoire  
 an' choorch an' staate,  
 An' i' the woost o' toimes I wur niver  
 agin the raate.

An' I hallus coom'd to 's choorch afoor  
 moy Sally wur dead,  
 An' 'eard 'um a bummin' awaay loike a  
 buzzard-clock<sup>2</sup> ower my 'ead,  
 An' I niver knaw'd whot a mean'd but  
 I thowt a 'ad summut to saay,  
 An' I thowt a said whot a owt to 'a said,  
 an' I coom'd awaay.

Bessy Marris's barne! tha knaws she  
 laaid it to mea.  
 Mowt a bean, mayhap, for she wur a  
 bad un, shea.

<sup>1</sup> ou as in *hour* [The notes on this poem and  
 the one on page 536 are Tennyson's.]

<sup>2</sup> Cockchafer.



'Siver, I kep 'um, I kep 'um, my lass, tha  
mun understand;  
I done moy duty boy 'um, as I 'a done  
boy the lond.

But Parson a cooms an' a goas, an' a says  
it easy an' freea:  
"The Amoighty 's a taakin o' you to  
'issén, my friend," says 'ea.  
I weant saay men be loiars, thaw summun  
said it in 'aaste;  
But 'e reads wonn sarmin a weeak, an' I  
'a stubb'd Thurnaby waaste.

D' ya moind the waaste, my lass? naw,  
naw, tha was not born then;  
Theer wur a boggle in it, I often 'eard  
'um mysén;  
Moast loike a butter-bump,<sup>1</sup> fur I 'eard  
'um about an' about,  
But I stubb'd 'um oop wi' the lot, an'  
raaved an' rembled 'um out.

Keaper's it wur; fo' they fun 'um theer  
a-laaid of 'is faace  
Down i' the woild 'enemies<sup>2</sup> afoor I  
coom'd to the plaace.  
Noaks or Thimbleby — toaner<sup>3</sup> 'ed shot  
'um as dead as a naail.  
Noaks wur 'ang'd for it oop at 'soize —  
but git ma my aale.

Dubbut looök at the waaste; theer  
warn't not feead for a cow;  
Nowt at all but bracken an' fuzz, an'  
look at it now —  
Warn't worth nowt a haacre, an' now  
theer 's lots o' feead,  
Fourscoor yows<sup>4</sup> upon it, an' some on it  
down i' seead.<sup>5</sup>

Nobbut a bit on it 's left, an' I mean'd to  
'a stubb'd it at fall,  
Done it ta-year I mean'd, an' runn'd plow  
thruff it an' all,  
If Godamoighty an' parson 'ud nobbut let  
ma aloan, —  
Mea, wi' haate hoonderd haacre o'  
Squire's, an lond o' my oan.

Do Godamoighty know what a's doing  
a-taakin' o' mea?  
I beant wonn as saws 'ere a bean an yon-  
der a pea;

An' Squire 'ull be sa mad an' all — a'  
dear, a' dear!  
And I 'a managed for Squire coom  
Michaelmas thutty year.

A mowt 'a taaen owd Joanes, as 'ant not a  
'aapoth o' sense,  
Or a mowt a' taaen young Robins — a  
niver mended a fence;  
But Godamoighty a moost taake mea an'  
taake ma now,  
Wi' aaf the cows to cauve an' Thurnaby  
hoalms to plow!

Looök 'ow quoloty smoiles when they  
seas ma a passin' boy,  
Says to thessén, naw doubt, "What a  
man a bea sewer-loi!"  
Fur they knaws what I bean to Squire  
sin' fust a coom'd to the 'All;  
I done moy duty by Squire an' I done  
moy duty boy hall.

Squire 's i' Lunnon, an' summun I  
reckons 'ull 'a to wroite,  
For whoa 's to howd the lond ater mea  
thot muddles ma quoit;  
Sartin-sewer I bea thot a weant niver  
give it to Joanes,  
Naw, nor a moant to Robins — a niver  
rembles the stoans.

But summun 'ull come ater mea mayhap  
wi' 'is kittle o' steam  
Huzzin' an' maazin' the blessed fealds  
wi' the divil's oan team.  
Sin' I mun doy I mun doy, thaw loife  
they says is sweet,  
But sin' I mun doy I mun doy, for I  
couldn abear to see it.

What atta stannin' theer fur, an' doesn  
bring ma the aale?  
Doctor's a 'toattler, lass, an a's hallus i'  
the owd taale;  
I weant break rules fur Doctor, a knaws  
naw moor nor a floy;  
Git ma my aale, I tell tha, an' if I mun  
doy I mun doy. 1864.

#### THE FLOWER<sup>1</sup>

ONCE in a golden hour  
I cast to earth a seed.  
Up there came a flower,  
The people said, a weed.

<sup>1</sup> See the *Life of Tennyson*, II, 10-11.

<sup>1</sup> Bittern. <sup>2</sup> Anemones. <sup>3</sup> One or other.

<sup>4</sup> ou as in *hour*.

<sup>5</sup> Clover.

To and fro they went  
Thro' my garden-bower,  
And muttering discontent  
Cursed me and my flower.

Then it grew so tall  
It wore a crown of light,  
But thieves from o'er the wall  
Stole the seed by night;

Sow'd it far and wide  
By every town and tower,  
Till all the people cried  
"Splendid is the flower."

Read my little fable:  
He that runs may read.  
Most can raise the flowers now  
For all have got the seed.

And some are pretty enough,  
And some are poor indeed;  
And now again the people  
Call it but a weed. 1864.

#### IN THE VALLEY OF CAUTERETZ

ALL along the valley, stream that flashest  
white,  
Deepening thy voice with the deepening  
of the night,  
All along the valley, where thy waters  
flow,  
I walk'd with one I loved two and thirty  
years ago.  
Along the valley, while I walk'd today,  
The two and thirty years were a mist that  
rolls away;  
For all along the valley, down thy rocky  
bed,  
Thy living voice to me was as the voice of  
the dead,  
And all along the valley, by rock and cave  
and tree,  
The voice of the dead was a living voice  
to me. 1861. 1864.

#### A DEDICATION

DEAR, near and true — no truer Time  
himself  
Can prove you, tho' he make you ever-  
more  
Dearer and nearer, as the rapid of life

Shoots to the fall, — take this and pray  
that he  
Who wrote it, honoring your sweet faith  
in him,  
May trust himself; and after praise and  
scorn,  
As one who feels the immeasurable world,  
Attain the wise indifference of the wise;  
And after autumn past — if left to pass  
His autumn into seeming-leafless days —  
Draw toward the long frost and longest  
night,  
Wearing his wisdom lightly, like the fruit  
Which in our winter woodland looks a  
flower. 1864.

#### WAGES

GLORY of warrior, glory of orator, glory of  
song,  
Paid with a voice flying by to be lost  
on an endless sea —  
Glory of Virtue, to fight, to struggle, to  
right the wrong —  
Nay, but she aim'd not at glory, no  
lover of glory she;  
Give her the glory of going on, and still  
to be.

The wages of sin is death: if the wages  
of Virtue be dust,  
Would she have heart to endure for the  
life of the worm and the fly?  
She desires no isles of the blest, no quiet  
seats of the just,  
To rest in a golden grove, or to bask in  
a summer sky;  
Give her the wages of going on, and not  
to die. 1868.

#### FROM THE COMING OF ARTHUR

##### MERLIN'S RIDDLE

RAIN, rain, and sun! a rainbow in the  
sky!  
A young man will be wiser by and by;  
An old man's wit may wander ere he  
die.

Rain, rain, and sun! a rainbow on the  
lea!  
And truth is this to me, and that to  
thee;  
And truth or clothed or naked let it be.

Rain, sun, and rain! and the free blossom  
 blows;  
 Sun, rain, and sun! and where is he who  
 knows?  
 From the great deep to the great deep he  
 goes. 1869.

## TRUMPET SONG

Blow trumpet, for the world is white  
 with May!  
 Blow trumpet, the long night hath roll'd  
 away!  
 Blow thro' the living world — "Let the  
 King reign!"

Shall Rome or Heathen rule in Arthur's  
 realm?  
 Flash brand and lance, fall battle-axe  
 upon helm,  
 Fall battle-axe, and flash brand! Let  
 the King reign!

Strike for the King and live! his knights  
 have heard  
 That God hath told the King a secret  
 word.  
 Fall battle-axe, and flash brand! Let the  
 King reign!

Blow trumpet! he will lift us from the  
 dust.  
 Blow trumpet! live the strength, and die  
 the lust!  
 Clang battle-axe, and clash brand! Let  
 the King reign!

Strike for the King and die! and if thou  
 diest,  
 The King is king, and ever wills the high-  
 est.  
 Clang battle-axe, and clash brand! Let  
 the King reign!

Blow, for our Sun is mighty in his May!  
 Blow, for our Sun is mightier day by  
 day!  
 Clang battle-axe, and clash brand! Let  
 the King reign!

The King will follow Christ, and we the  
 King,  
 In whom high God hath breathed a secret  
 thing.  
 Fall battle-axe, and flash brand! Let  
 the King reign! 1874.

## THE HIGHER PANTHEISM

THE sun, the moon, the stars, the seas,  
 the hills and the plains —  
 Are not these, O Soul, the vision of Him  
 who reigns?

Is not the Vision He, tho' He be not that  
 which He seems?  
 Dreams are true while they last, and do  
 we not live in dreams?

Earth, these solid stars, this weight of  
 body and limb,  
 Are they not sign and symbol of thy di-  
 vision from Him?

Dark is the world to thee; thy self art  
 the reason why,  
 For is He not all but thou, that hast  
 power to feel "I am I"?

Glory about thee, without thee; and  
 thou fulfillest thy doom,  
 Making Him broken gleams and a stifled  
 splendor and gloom.

Speak to Him, thou, for He hears, and  
 Spirit with Spirit can meet —  
 Closer is He than breathing, and nearer  
 than hands and feet.

God is law, say the wise; O soul, and let  
 us rejoice,  
 For if He thunder by law the thunder is  
 yet His voice.

Law is God, say some; no God at all,  
 says the fool,  
 For all we have power to see is a straight  
 staff bent in a pool;

And the ear of man cannot hear, and the  
 eye of man cannot see;  
 But if we could see and hear, this Vision  
 — were it not He? 1869.

## FLOWER IN THE CRANNIED WALL

FLOWER in the crannied wall,  
 I pluck you out of the crannies,  
 I hold you here, root and all, in my hand,  
 Little flower — but *if* I could understand  
 What you are, root and all, and all in all,  
 I should know what God and man is. 1869.

## NORTHERN FARMER

## NEW STYLE

DOSN'T thou 'ear my 'erse's legs, as they  
canters awaay?

Proputty, proputty, proputty — that's  
what I 'ears 'em saay.

Proputty, proputty, proputty — Sam,  
thou's an ass for thy pains;  
Theer's moor sense i' one o' 'is legs, nor in  
all thy brains.

Woa — theer's a craw to pluck wi' tha,  
Sam: yon 's parson's 'ouse —

Dosn't thou know that a man mun be  
eather a man or a mouse?

Time to think on it then; for thou'll be  
twenty to weeak.<sup>1</sup>

Proputty, proputty — woa then, woa —  
let ma 'ear mysen speak.

Me an' thy muther, Sammy, 'as bean  
a-talkin' o' thee;

Thou's bean talkin' to muther, an' she  
bean a-tellin' it me.

Thou'll not marry for munny — thou's  
sweet upo' parson's lass —

Noa — thou 'll marry for luvv — an' we  
boath on us thinks tha an ass.

Seea'd her to-daay goa by — Saaint's-  
daay — they was ringing the bells.  
She's a beauty, thou thinks — an' soa is  
scoors o' gells.

Them as 'as munny an' all — wot's a  
beauty? — the flower as blaws.

But proputty, proputty sticks, an' pro-  
putty, proputty grows.

Do'ant be stunt; <sup>2</sup> taake time. I knaws  
what maakes tha sa mad.

Warn't I craazed fur the lasses mysén  
when I wur a lad?

But I knaw'd a Quaaker feller as often  
'as tow'd ma this:

“Doant thou marry for munny, but goa  
wheer munny is!”

An' I went wheer munny war; an' thy  
muther coom to 'and,

Wi' lots o' munny laaid by, an' a nicetish  
bit o' land.

Maaybe she warn't a beauty — I niver  
giv it a thowt —

But warn't she as good to cuddle an'  
kiss as a lass as 'ant nowt?

<sup>1</sup> This week. [See note on page 532.] <sup>2</sup> Obstinate.

Parson's lass 'ant nowt, an' she weant 'a  
nowt when 'e 's dead,

Mun be a guvness, lad, or summut, and  
addle<sup>1</sup> her bread.

Why? fur 'e 's nobbut a curate, an'  
weant niver get hissén clear,

An' 'e maade the bed as 'e ligs on afoor  
'e coom'd to the shere.

An' thin 'e coom'd to the parish wi' lots  
o' Varsity debt,

Stook to his taaïl they did, an' 'e 'ant  
got shut on 'em yet.

An' 'e ligs on 'is back i' the grip, wi' noan  
to lend 'im a shove,

Woorse nor a far-welter'd <sup>2</sup> yowe; fur,  
Sammy, 'e married fur luvv.

Luvv? what's luvv? thou can luvv thy  
lass an' 'er munny too,

Maakin' 'em goa togethir, as they've good  
right to do.

Couldn I luvv thy muther by cause 'o 'er  
munny laaïd by?

Naay — fur I luvv'd 'er a vast sight moor  
fur it; reason why.

Ay, an' thy muther says thou wants to  
marry the lass,

Cooms of a gentleman burn; an' we  
boath on us thinks tha an ass.

Woa then, proputty, wiltha? — an ass as  
near as mays nowt <sup>3</sup> —

Woa then, wiltha? dangtha! — the bees  
is as fell as owt.<sup>4</sup>

Break me a bit o' the esh for his 'ead,  
lad, out o' the fence!

Gentleman burn! what's gentleman  
burn? is it shillins an' pence?

Proputty, proputty's ivrything 'ere, an',  
Sammy, I'm blest

If it is n't the saame oop yonder, fur them  
as 'as it 's the best.

Tis 'n them as 'as munny as breaks into  
'ouses an' steals,

Them as 'as coats to their backs an' taakes  
their regular meals.

Noa, but it 's them as niver knaws wheer  
a meal's to be 'ad.

Taake my word for it Sammy, the poor  
in a loomp is bad.

<sup>1</sup> Earn.

<sup>2</sup> Or, fow-welter'd, — said of a sheep lying on its  
back in the furrow.

<sup>3</sup> Makes nothing.

<sup>4</sup> The flies are as fierce as anything.

Them or thir feythers, tha sees, mun 'a  
 bean a laazy lot,  
 Fur work mun 'a gone to the gittin' whin-  
 iver munny was got.  
 Feyther 'ad ammost nowt; leastways 'is  
 munny was 'id.  
 But 'e tued an' moil'd issén dead, an' 'e  
 died a good un, 'e did.

Looök thou theer wheer Wigglesby beck  
 cooms out by the 'ill!  
 Feyther run oop to the farm, an' I runs  
 oop to the mill;  
 An' I 'll run oop to the brig, an' that  
 thou 'll live to see;  
 And if thou marries a good un I 'll leave  
 the land to thee.

Thim's my noations, Sammy, wheerby  
 I means to stick;  
 But if thou marries a bad un, I 'll leave  
 the land to Dick.—  
 Coom oop, propuppy, propuppy — that's  
 what I 'ears 'im saay —  
 Propuppy, propuppy, propuppy — canter  
 an' canter awaay. 1870.

#### ENGLAND AND AMERICA IN 1782

O THOU that sendest out the man  
 To rule by land and sea,  
 Strong mother of a lion-line,  
 Be proud of those strong sons of thine  
 Who wrench'd their rights from thee!

What wonder if in noble heat  
 Those men thine arms withstood,  
 Retaught the lesson thou hadst taught,  
 And in thy spirit with thee fought —  
 Who sprang from English blood!

But thou rejoice with liberal joy,  
 Lift up thy rocky face,  
 And shatter, when the storms are black,  
 In many a streaming torrent back,  
 The seas that shock thy base!

Whatever harmonies of law  
 The growing world assume,  
 Thy work is thine — the single note  
 From that deep chord which Hampden  
 smote  
 Will vibrate to the doom. 1872.

#### THE VOICE AND THE PEAK

THE voice and the Peak,  
 Far over summit and lawn,  
 The lone glow and long roar  
 Green-rushing from the rosy thrones  
 of dawn!

All night have I heard the voice  
 Rave over the rocky bar,  
 But thou wert silent in heaven,  
 Above thee glided the star.

Hast thou no voice, O Peak,  
 That standest high above all?  
 "I am the voice of the Peak,  
 I roar and rave, for I fall.

"A thousand voices go  
 To North, South, East, and West;  
 They leave the heights and are troubled,  
 And moan and sink to their rest.

"The fields are fair beside them,  
 The chestnut towers in his bloom;  
 But they — they feel the desire of the  
 deep —  
 Fall, and follow their doom.

"The deep has power on the height,  
 And the height has power on the deep;  
 They are raised for ever and ever,  
 And sink again into sleep."

Not raised for ever and ever,  
 But when their cycle is o'er,  
 The valley, the voice, the peak, the star  
 Pass, and are found no more.

The Peak is high and flush'd  
 At his highest with sunrise fire;  
 The Peak is high, and the stars are high,  
 And the thought of a man is higher.

A deep below the deep,  
 And a height beyond the height!  
 Our hearing is not hearing,  
 And our seeing is not sight.

The voice and the Peak  
 Far into heaven withdrawn,  
 The lone glow and long roar  
 Green-rushing from the rosy thrones  
 of dawn! 1874.



## LYRICS FROM QUEEN MARY

## MILKMAID'S SONG

SHAME upon you, Robin,  
 Shame upon you now!  
 Kiss me would you? with my hands  
 Milking the cow?  
 Daisies grow again,  
 Kingcups blow again,  
 And you came and kiss'd me milking the  
 cow.

Robin came behind me,  
 Kiss'd me well, I vow.  
 Cuff him could I? with my hands  
 Milking the cow?  
 Swallows fly again,  
 Cuckoos cry again,  
 And you came and kiss'd me milking the  
 cow.

Come, Robin, Robin,  
 Come and kiss me now,  
 Help it can I? with my hands  
 Milking the cow?  
 Ringdoves coo again,  
 All things woo again.  
 Come behind and kiss me milking the  
 cow!

## LOW, LUTE, LOW!

HAPLESS doom of woman happy in be-  
 trothing!  
 Beauty passes like a breath, and love is  
 lost in loathing.  
 Low, my lute; speak low, my lute, but  
 say the world is nothing —  
 Low, lute, low!

Love will hover round the flowers when  
 they first awaken;  
 Love will fly the fallen leaf, and not be  
 overtaken.  
 Low, my lute! O, low, my lute! we fade  
 and are forsaken —  
 Low, dear lute, low!

1875.

## MONTENEGRO

THEY rose to where their sovran eagle  
 sails,  
 They kept their faith, their freedom, on  
 the height,  
 Chaste, frugal, savage, arm'd by day  
 and night

Against the Turk; whose inroad nowhere  
 scales  
 Their headlong passes, but his footstep  
 fails,  
 And red with blood the Crescent reels  
 from fight  
 Before their dauntless hundreds, in prone  
 flight  
 By thousands down the crags and thro'  
 the vales.  
 O smallest among peoples! rough rock-  
 throne  
 Of Freedom! warriors beating back the  
 swarm  
 Of Turkish Islam for five hundred years,  
 Great Tsernogora! never since thine own  
 Black ridges drew the cloud and brake  
 the storm  
 Has breathed a race of mightier mountain-  
 eers.  
 1877.

THE REVENGE<sup>1</sup>

## A BALLAD OF THE FLEET

## I

At Flores in the Azores Sir Richard  
 Grenville lay,  
 And a pinnace, like a flutter'd bird, came  
 flying from far away;  
 "Spanish ships of war at sea! we have  
 sighted fifty-three!"  
 Then sware Lord Thomas Howard:  
 "'Fore God I am no coward;  
 But I cannot meet them here, for my  
 ships are out of gear,  
 And the half my men are sick. I must  
 fly, but follow quick.  
 We are six ships of the line; can we  
 fight with fifty-three?"

## II

Then spake Sir Richard Grenville: "I  
 know you are no coward;  
 You fly them for a moment to fight with  
 them again.  
 But I've ninety men and more that are  
 lying sick ashore.  
 I should count myself the coward if I  
 left them, my Lord Howard,  
 To these Inquisition dogs and the devil-  
 doms of Spain."

<sup>1</sup> See the *Life of Tennyson*, II, 251-252.

## III

So Lord Howard past away with five  
ships of war that day,  
Till he melted like a cloud in the silent  
summer heaven;  
But Sir Richard bore in hand all his sick  
men from the land  
Very carefully and slow,  
Men of Bideford in Devon,  
And we laid them on the ballast down  
below:  
For we brought them all aboard,  
And they blest him in their pain, that  
they were not left to Spain,  
To the thumbscrew and the stake, for the  
glory of the Lord.

## IV

He had only a hundred seamen to work  
the ship and to fight.  
And he sailed away from Flores till the  
Spaniard came in sight,  
With his huge sea-castles heaving upon  
the weather bow.  
"Shall we fight or shall we fly?  
Good Sir Richard, tell us now,  
For to fight is but to die!  
There 'll be little of us left by the time  
this sun be set."  
And Sir Richard said again: "We be all  
good English men.  
Let us bang these dogs of Seville, the  
children of the devil,  
For I never turn'd my back upon Don or  
devil yet."

## V

Sir Richard spoke and he laugh'd, and  
we roar'd a hurrah, and so  
The little Revenge ran on sheer into the  
heart of the foe,  
With her hundred fighters on deck, and  
her ninety sick below.  
For half of their fleet to the right and  
half to the left were seen,  
And the little Revenge ran on thro' the  
long sea-lane between.

## VI

Thousands of their soldiers look'd down  
from their decks and laugh'd,  
Thousands of their seamen made mock  
at the mad little craft  
Running on and on, till delay'd

By their mountain-like San Philip that,  
of fifteen hundred tons,  
And up-shadowing high above us with her  
yawning tiers of guns,  
Took the breath from our sails, and we  
stay'd.

## VII

And while now the great San Philip  
hung above us like a cloud  
Whence the thunderbolt will fall  
Long and loud,  
Four galleons drew away  
From the Spanish fleet that day,  
And two upon the larboard and two upon  
the starboard lay,  
And the battle-thunder broke from them  
all.

## VIII

But anon the great San Philip, she be-  
thought herself and went,  
Having that within her womb that had  
left her ill content;  
And the rest they came aboard us, and  
they fought us hand to hand,  
For a dozen times they came with their  
pikes and musqueteers,  
And a dozen times we shook 'em off as a  
dog that shakes his ears  
When he leaps from the water to the land.

## IX

And the sun went down, and the stars  
came out far over the summer sea,  
But never a moment ceased the fight of  
the one and the fifty-three.  
Ship after ship, the whole night long, their  
high-built galleons came,  
Ship after ship, the whole night long, with  
her battle-thunder and flame;  
Ship after ship, the whole night long, drew  
back with her dead and her shame.  
For some were sunk and many were  
shatter'd, and so could fight us no  
more —  
God of battles, was ever a battle like this  
in the world before?

## X

For he said, "Fight on! fight on!"  
Tho' his vessel was all but a wreck;  
And it chanced that, when half of the  
short summer night was gone,

With a grisly wound to be drest he had  
left the deck,  
But a bullet struck him that was dressing  
it suddenly dead,  
And himself he was wounded again in the  
side and the head,  
And he said, "Fight on! fight on!"

## XI

And the night went down, and the sun  
smiled out far over the summer  
sea,  
And the Spanish fleet with broken sides  
lay round us all in a ring;  
But they dared not touch us again, for  
they fear'd that we still could  
sting,  
So they watch'd what the end would be.  
And we had not fought them in vain,  
But in perilous plight were we,  
Seeing forty of our poor hundred were  
slain,  
And half of the rest of us maim'd for  
life  
In the crash of the cannonades and the  
desperate strife;  
And the sick men down in the hold were  
most of them stark and cold.  
And the pikes were all broken or bent,  
and the powder was all of it  
spent;  
And the masts and the rigging were lying  
over the side;  
But Sir Richard cried in his English  
pride:  
"We have fought such a fight for a day  
and a night  
As may never be fought again!  
We have won great glory, my men!  
And a day less or more  
At sea or ashore,  
We die — does it matter when?  
Sink me the ship, Master Gunner — sink  
her, split her in twain!  
Fall into the hands of God, not into the  
hands of Spain!"

## XII

And the gunner said, "Ay, ay," but the  
seamen made reply:  
"We have children, we have wives,  
And the Lord hath spared our lives.  
We will make the Spaniard promise, if  
we yield, to let us go;

We shall live to fight again and to strike  
another blow."  
And the lion there lay dying, and they  
yielded to the foe.

## XIII

And the stately Spanish men to their  
flagship bore him then,  
Where they laid him by the mast, old Sir  
Richard caught at last,  
And they praised him to his face with  
their courtly foreign grace;  
But he rose upon their decks, and he  
cried:  
"I have fought for Queen and Faith like  
a valiant man and true;  
I have only done my duty as a man is  
bound to do.  
With a joyful spirit I Sir Richard Gren-  
ville die!"  
And he fell upon their decks, and he died.

## XIV

And they stared at the dead that had  
been so valiant and true,  
And had holden the power and glory of  
Spain so cheap  
That he dared her with one little ship and  
his English few;  
Was he devil or man? He was devil for  
aught they knew,  
But they sank his body with honor down  
into the deep.  
And they mann'd the Revenge with a  
swarthier alien crew,  
And away she sail'd with her loss and  
long'd for her own;  
When a wind from the lands they had  
ruin'd awoke from sleep,  
And the water began to heave and the  
weather to moan,  
And or ever that evening ended a great  
gale blew,  
And a wave like the wave that is raised  
by an earthquake grew,  
Till it smote on their hulls and their sails  
and their masts and their flags,  
And the whole sea plunged and fell on  
the shot-shatter'd navy of Spain,  
And the little Revenge herself went down  
by the island crags  
To be lost evermore in the main.

THE DEFENCE OF LUCKNOW<sup>1</sup>

## I

BANNER of England, not for a season, O  
 banner of Britain, hast thou  
 Floated in conquering battle or flapped  
 to the battle-cry!  
 Never with mightier glory than when  
 we had rear'd thee on high  
 Flying at top of the roofs in the ghastly  
 siege of Lucknow —  
 Shot thro' the staff or the halyard, but  
 ever we raised thee anew,  
 And ever upon the topmost roof our  
 banner of England blew.

## II

Frail were the works that defended the  
 hold that we held with our lives —  
 Women and children among us, God help  
 them, our children and wives!  
 Hold it we might — and for fifteen days  
 or for twenty at most.  
 "Never surrender, I charge you, but  
 every man die at his post!"  
 Voice of the dead whom we loved, our  
 Lawrence, the best of the brave;  
 Cold were his brows when we kiss'd  
 him — we laid him that night in  
 his grave.  
 "Every man die at his post!" and there  
 hail'd on our houses and halls  
 Death from their rifle bullets, and death  
 from their cannon-balls,  
 Death in our innermost chamber, and  
 death at our slight barricade,  
 Death while we stood with the musket,  
 and death while we stooped to the  
 spade,  
 Death to the dying, and wounds to the  
 wounded, for often there fell,  
 Striking the hospital wall, crashing  
 thro' it, their shot and their shell,  
 Death — for their spies were among us,  
 their marksmen were told of our  
 best,  
 So that the brute bullet broke thro' the  
 brain that could think for the  
 rest;

<sup>1</sup> "The old flag used during the defence of the Residency, was hoisted on the Lucknow flagstaff by General Wilson, and the soldiers who still survived from the siege were all mustered on parade in honor of this poem, when my son Lionel (who died on his journey from India) visited Lucknow. A tribute overwhelmingly touching." (*Tennyson*.)

Bullets would sing by our foreheads, and  
 bullets would rain at our feet —  
 Fire from ten thousand at once of the  
 rebels that girdled us round —  
 Death at the glimpse of a finger from  
 over the breadth of a street,  
 Death from the heights of the mosque  
 and the palace, and death in the  
 ground!  
 Mine? yes, a mine! Countermine!  
 down, down! and creep thro' the  
 hole!  
 Keep the revolver in hand! you can hear  
 him — the murderous mole!  
 Quiet, ah! quiet — wait till the point of  
 the pickaxe be thro'!  
 Click with the pick, coming nearer and  
 nearer again than before —  
 Now let it speak, and you fire, and the  
 dark pioneer is no more;  
 And ever upon the topmost roof our  
 banner of England blew!

## III

Ay, but the foe sprung his mine many  
 times, and it chanced on a day  
 Soon as the blast of that underground  
 thunder-clap echo'd away.  
 Dark thro' the smoke and the sulphur like  
 so many fiends in their hell —  
 Cannon-shot, musket-shot, volley on  
 volley, and yell upon yell —  
 Fiercely on all the defences our myriad  
 enemy fell.  
 What have they done? where is it? Out  
 yonder. Guard the Redan!  
 Storm at the Water-gate! storm at the  
 Bailey-gate! storm, and it ran  
 Surging and swaying all round us, as  
 ocean on every side  
 Plunges and heaves at a bank that is  
 daily drowned by the tide —  
 So many thousands that, if they be bold  
 enough, who shall escape?  
 Kill or be kill'd, live or die, they shall  
 know we are soldiers and men!  
 Ready! take aim at their leaders —  
 their masses are gapp'd with our  
 grape —  
 Backward they reel like the wave, like the  
 wave fingering forward again,  
 Flying and foil'd at the last by the hand-  
 ful they could not subdue;  
 And ever upon the topmost roof our  
 banner of England blew!

## IV

Handful of men as we were, we were  
 English in heart and in limb,  
 Strong with the strength of the race to  
 command, to obey, to endure,  
 Each of us fought as if hope for the gar-  
 rison hung but on him;  
 Still — could we watch at all points? we  
 were every day fewer and fewer.  
 There was a whisper among us, but only  
 a whisper that past:  
 "Children and wives — if the tigers leap  
 into the fold unawares —  
 Every man die at his post — and the foe  
 may outlive us at last —  
 Better to fall by the hands that they love,  
 than to fall into theirs!"  
 Roar upon roar in a moment two mines by  
 the enemy sprung  
 Clove into perilous chasms our walls and  
 our poor palisades.  
 Riflemen, true is your heart, but be sure  
 that your hand be as true!  
 Sharp is the fire of assault, better aimed  
 are your flank fusillades —  
 Twice do we hurl them to earth from the  
 ladders to which they had clung,  
 Twice from the ditch where they shelter  
 we drive them with hand-gre-  
 nades;  
 And ever upon the topmost roof our  
 banner of England blew!

## V

Then on another wild morning another  
 wild earthquake out-tore  
 Clean from our lines of defence ten or  
 twelve good paces or more.  
 Riflemen, high on the roof, hidden there  
 from the light of the sun  
 One has leaped up on the breach, crying  
 out: "Follow me, follow me!" —  
 Mark him — he falls! then another and  
*him* too, and down goes he.  
 Had they been bold enough then, who can  
 tell but the traitors had won?  
 Boardings and rafters and doors — an  
 embrasure! make way for the  
 gun!  
 Now double-charge it with grape! It is  
 charged and we fire, and they  
 run.  
 Praise to our Indian brothers, and let the  
 dark face have his due!

Thanks to the kindly dark faces who  
 fought with us, faithful and few,  
 Fought with the bravest among us, and  
 drove them, and smote them, and  
 slew,  
 That ever upon the topmost roof our  
 banner in India blew.

## VI

Men will forget what we suffer and not  
 what we do. We can fight!  
 But to be soldier all day, and be sentinel  
 all thro' the night —  
 Ever the mine and assault, our sallies,  
 their lying alarms,  
 Bugles and drums in the darkness, and  
 shoutings and soundings to arms,  
 Ever the labor of fifty that had to be done  
 by five,  
 Ever the marvel among us that one should  
 be left alive,  
 Ever the day with its traitorous death  
 from the loopholes around,  
 Ever the night with its coffinless corpse to  
 be laid in the ground,  
 Heat like the mouth of a hell, or a deluge  
 of cataract skies,  
 Stench of old offal decaying, and infinite  
 torment of flies,  
 Thoughts of the breezes of May blowing  
 over an English field,  
 Cholera, scurvy, and fever, the wound  
 that *would* not be heal'd,  
 Lopping away of the limb by the pitiful-  
 pitiless knife, —  
 Torture and trouble in vain, — for it  
 never could save us a life,  
 Valor of delicate women who tended the  
 hospital bed,  
 Horror of women in travail among the  
 dying and dead,  
 Grief for our perishing children, and  
 never a moment for grief,  
 Toil and ineffable weariness, faltering  
 hopes of relief,  
 Havelock baffled, or beaten, or butcher'd  
 for all that we knew —  
 Then day and night, day and night, com-  
 ing down on the still-shatter'd  
 walls  
 Millions of musket-bullets, and thousands  
 of cannon-balls —  
 But ever upon the topmost roof our  
 banner of England blew.



## VII

Hark cannonade, fusillade! is it true  
 what was told by the scout,  
 Outram and Havelock breaking their way  
 through the fell mutineers?  
 Surely the pibroch of Europe is ringing  
 again in our ears?  
 All on a sudden the garrison utter a  
 jubilant shout,  
 Havelock's glorious Highlanders answer  
 with conquering cheers,  
 Sick from the hospital echo them, women  
 and children come out,  
 Blessing the wholesome white faces of  
 Havelock's good fusileers.  
 Kissing the war-harden'd hand of the  
 Highlander wet with their tears!  
 Dance to the pibroch! — saved! we are  
 saved! — is it you? is it you?  
 Saved by the valor of Havelock, saved  
 by the blessing of heaven!  
 "Hold it for fifteen days!" we have held  
 it for eighty-seven!  
 And ever aloft on the palace roof the old  
 banner of England blew. 1879.

RIZPAH<sup>1</sup>

## 17 —

WAILING, wailing, wailing, the wind over  
 land and sea —  
 And Willy's voice in the wind, "O  
 mother, come out to me!"  
 Why should he call me to-night, when he  
 knows that I cannot go?  
 For the downs are as bright as day, and  
 the full moon stares at the snow.

We should be seen, my dear; they would  
 spy us out of the town.  
 The loud black nights for us, and the  
 storm rushing over the down,  
 When I cannot see my own hand, but am  
 led by the creak of the chain,  
 And grovel and grope for my son till I  
 find myself drenched with the rain.

Anything fallen again? nay — what was  
 there left to fall?  
 I have taken them home, I have num-  
 ber'd the bones, I have hidden  
 them all.

What am I saying? and what are *you*?  
 do you come as a spy!  
 Falls? what falls? who knows? As the  
 tree falls so must it lie.

Who let her in? how long has she been?  
 you — what have you heard?  
 Why did you sit so quiet? you never have  
 spoken a word.  
 O — to pray with me — yes — a lady —  
 none of their spies —  
 But the night has crept into my heart,  
 and begun to darken my eyes.

Ah — you, that have lived so soft, what  
 should *you* know of the night,  
 The blast and the burning shame and the  
 bitter frost and the fright?  
 I have done it, while you were asleep —  
 you were only made for the day.  
 I have gather'd my baby together — and  
 now you may go your way.

Nay — for it's kind of you, madam, to sit  
 by an old dying wife.  
 But say nothing hard of my boy, I have  
 only an hour of life.  
 I kiss'd my boy in the prison, before he  
 went out to die.  
 "They dared me to do it," he said, and he  
 never has told me a lie.  
 I whipped him for robbing an orchard  
 once when he was but a child —  
 "The farmer dared me to do it," he said;  
 he was always so wild —  
 And idle — and couldn't be idle — my  
 Willy — he never could rest.  
 The King should have made him a sol-  
 dier, he would have been one of his  
 best.

But he lived with a lot of wild mates, and  
 they never would let him be good;  
 They swore that he dare not rob the  
 mail, and he swore that he would;  
 And he took no life, but he took one purse,  
 and when all was done  
 He flung it among his fellows — "I'll  
 none of it," said my son.

I came into court to the judge and the  
 lawyers. I told them my tale,  
 God's own truth — but they kill'd him,  
 they kill'd him for robbing the  
 mail.

<sup>1</sup> See the *Life of Tennyson*, II, 249-251.

They hang'd him in chains for a show —  
 we had always borne a good  
 name —  
 To be hang'd for a thief — and then put  
 away — is n't that enough shame?  
 Dust to dust — low down — let us hide!  
 but they set him so high  
 That all the ships of the world could  
 stare at him, passing by.  
 God 'll pardon the hell-black raven and  
 horrible fowls of the air,  
 But not the black heart of the lawyer who  
 kill'd him and hang'd him there.

And the jailer forced me away. I had bid  
 him my last good-bye;  
 They had fasten'd the door of his cell.  
 "O mother!" I heard him cry.  
 I could n't get back tho' I tried, he had  
 something further to say,  
 And now I never shall know it. The  
 jailer forced me away.  
 Then since I could n't but hear that cry  
 of my boy that was dead,  
 They seized me and shut me up: they  
 fasten'd me down on my bed.  
 "Mother, O mother!" — he call'd in the  
 dark to me year after year —  
 They beat me for that, they beat me —  
 you know that I could n't but  
 hear;  
 And then at the last they found I had  
 grown so stupid and still  
 They let me abroad again — but the crea-  
 tures had worked their will.

Flesh of my flesh was gone, but bone of  
 my bone was left —  
 I stole them all from the lawyers — and  
 you, will you call it a theft? —  
 My baby, the bones that had suck'd me,  
 the bones that had laughed and  
 had cried —  
 Theirs? O, no! they are mine — not  
 theirs — they had moved in my  
 side.

Do you think I was scared by the bones?  
 I kiss'd 'em, I buried 'em all —  
 I can't dig deep, I am old — in the night  
 by the churchyard wall.  
 My Willy 'll rise up whole when the  
 trumpet of judgment 'll sound,  
 But I charge you never to say that I laid  
 him in holy ground.

They would scratch him up — they would  
 hang him again on the cursed tree.  
 Sin? O, yes, we are sinners, I know — let  
 all that be,  
 And read me a Bible verse of the Lord's  
 good will toward men —  
 "Full of compassion and mercy, the  
 Lord" — let me hear it again;  
 "Full of compassion and mercy — long-  
 suffering." Yes, O, yes!  
 For the lawyer is born but to murder —  
 the Saviour lives but to bless.  
*He* 'll never put on the black cap except  
 for the worst of the worst,  
 And the first may be last — I have heard  
 it in church — and the last may be  
 first.  
 Suffering — O, long-suffering — yes, as  
 the Lord must know,  
 Year after year in the mist and the wind  
 and the shower and the snow.

Heard, have you? what? they have told  
 you he never repented his sin.  
 How do they know it? are *they* his  
 mother? are *you* of his kin?  
 Heard! have you ever heard, when the  
 storm on the downs began,  
 The wind that 'll wail like a child and the  
 sea that 'll moan like a man?

Election, Election, and Reprobation —  
 it's all very well.  
 But I go to-night to my boy, and I shall  
 not find him in hell.  
 For I cared so much for my boy that the  
 Lord has look'd into my care,  
 And He means me I'm sure to be happy  
 with Willy, I know not where.

And if *he* be lost — but to save *my* soul,  
 that is all your desire —  
 Do you think that I care for *my* soul if my  
 boy be gone to the fire?  
 I have been with God in the dark — go,  
 go, you may leave me alone —  
 You never have borne a child — you are  
 just as hard as a stone.

Madam, I beg your pardon! I think  
 that you mean to be kind,  
 But I cannot hear what you say for my  
 Willy's voice in the wind —  
 The snow and the sky so bright — he  
 used but to call in the dark,

And he calls to me now from the church  
and not from the gibbet—for  
hark!

Nay—you can hear it yourself—it is  
coming—shaking the walls—

Willy—the moon's in a cloud—Good-  
night. I am going. He calls.

1880.

## SONG FROM THE SISTERS

O DIVINER air,  
Thro' the heat, the drowth, the dust, the  
glare,

Far from out the west in shadowing  
showers,

Over all the meadow baked and bare,

Making fresh and fair

All the bowers and the flowers,

Fainting flowers, faded bowers,

Over all this weary world of ours,

Breathe, diviner Air!

O diviner light,

Thro' the cloud that roofs our noon with  
night,

Thro' the blotting mist, the blinding  
showers,

Far from out a sky for ever bright,

Over all the woodland's flooded bowers,

Over all the meadow's drowning flowers,

Over all this ruin'd world of ours,

Break, diviner light!

1880.

## MINNIE AND WINNIE

MINNIE and Winnie

Slept in a shell.

Sleep, little ladies!

And they slept well.

Pink was the shell within,

Silver without;

Sounds of the great sea

Wander'd about.

Sleep, little ladies!

Wake not soon!

Echo on echo

Dies to the moon.

Two bright stars

Peep'd into the shell.

“What are they dreaming of?

Who can tell?”

Started a green linnet

Out of the croft;

Wake, little ladies!

The sun is aloft!

1880.

TO VIRGIL<sup>1</sup>

ROMAN VIRGIL, thou that singest Ilion's  
lofty temples robed in fire,  
Ilion falling, Rome arising, wars, and  
filial faith, and Dido's pyre;

Landscape-lover, lord of language more  
than he that sang the “Works and  
Days,”

All the chosen coin of fancy flashing out  
from many a golden phrase;

Thou that singest wheat and woodland,  
tilth and vineyard, hive and horse  
and herd;

All the charm of all the Muses often  
flowering in a lonely word;

Poet of the happy Tityrus piping under-  
neath his beechen bowers;

Poet of the poet-satyr whom the laugh-  
ing shepherd bound with flowers;

Chanter of the Pollio, glorying in the  
blissful years again to be,

Summers of the snakeless meadow, un-  
laborious earth and oarless sea;

Thou that seest Universal Nature moved  
by Universal Mind;

Thou majestic in thy sadness at the  
doubtful doom of human kind;

Light among the vanish'd ages; star that  
gildest yet this phantom shore;

Golden branch amid the shadows, kings  
and realms that pass to rise no  
more;

Now thy Forum roars no longer, fallen  
every purple Cæsar's dome—

Tho' thine ocean-roll of rhythm sound  
forever of Imperial Rome—

Now the Rome of slaves hath perish'd,  
and the Rome of freemen holds her  
place,

I, from out the Northern Island sunder'd  
once from all the human race,

<sup>1</sup> “To Virgil was written at the request of the  
Mantuan for the nineteenth centenary of Virgil's  
Death.” (*Life of Tennyson*, II, 320.)

I salute thee, Mantovano, I that loved  
 thee since my day began,  
 Wielder of the stateliest measure ever  
 moulded by the lips of man.  
 1882.

### "FRATER AVE ATQUE VALE"

Row us out from Desenzano, to your  
 Sirmione row!  
 So they row'd, and there we landed — "O  
 venusta Sirmio!"  
 There to me thro' all the groves of olive in  
 the summer glow,  
 There beneath the Roman ruin where the  
 purple flowers grow,  
 Came that "Ave atque Vale" of the  
 Poet's hopeless woe,  
 Tenderest of Roman poets nineteen  
 hundred years ago  
 "Frater Ave atque Vale," — as we  
 wander'd to and fro  
 Gazing at the Lydian laughter of the  
 Garda Lake below  
 Sweet Catullus's all-but-island, olive-  
 silvery Sirmio!  
 1883.

### EPILOGUE TO THE CHARGE OF THE HEAVY BRIGADE

AND here the Singer for his art  
 Not all in vain may plead  
 "The song that nerves a nation's heart  
 Is in itself a deed."  
 1885.

### VASTNESS

MANY a hearth upon our dark globe sighs  
 after many a vanish'd face,  
 Many a planet by many a sun may roll  
 with the dust of a vanish'd race.

Raving politics, never at rest — as this  
 poor earth's pale history runs, —  
 What is it all but a trouble of ants in the  
 gleam of a million million of suns?

Lies upon this side, lies upon that side,  
 truthless violence mourn'd by the  
 wise,  
 Thousands of voices drowning his own in  
 a popular torrent of lies upon lies;

Stately purposes, valor in battle, glorious  
 annals of army and fleet,  
 Death for the right cause, death for the  
 wrong cause, trumpets of victory,  
 groans of defeat;

Innocence seethed in her mother's milk,  
 and Charity setting the martyr  
 aflame;

Thralldom who walks with the banner of  
 Freedom, and recks not to ruin a  
 realm in her name.

Faith at her zenith, or all but lost in the  
 gloom of doubts that darken the  
 schools;

Craft with a bunch of all-heal in her hand,  
 follow'd up by her vassal legion of  
 fools;

Trade flying over a thousand seas with  
 her spice and her vintage, her silk  
 and her corn;

Desolate offing, sailorless harbors, fam-  
 ishing populace, wharves forlorn;

Star of the morning, Hope in the sun-  
 rise; gloom of the evening, Life at  
 a close;

Pleasure who flaunts on her wide down-  
 way with her flying robe and her  
 poison'd rose;

Pain that has crawl'd from the corpse of  
 Pleasure, a worm which writhes  
 all day, and at night

Stirs up again in the heart of the sleeper,  
 and stings him back to the curse  
 of the light;

Wealth with his wines and his wedded  
 harlots; honest Poverty, bare to  
 the bone;

Opulent Avarice, lean as Poverty; Flat-  
 tery gilding the rift in a throne;

Fame blowing out from her golden trum-  
 pet a jubilant challenge to Time  
 and to Fate;

Slander, her shadow, sowing the nettle on  
 all the laurell'd graves of the great;

Love for the maiden, crown'd with mar-  
 riage, no regrets for aught that has  
 been,

Household happiness, gracious children,  
 debtless competence, golden mean;

National hatreds of whole generations,  
and pigmy spites of the village  
spire;  
Vows that will last to the last death-  
ruckle, and vows that are snapt in  
a moment of fire;

He that has lived for the lust of the  
minute, and died in the doing it,  
flesh without mind;  
He that has nail'd all flesh to the Cross,  
till Self died out in the love of his  
kind;

Spring and Summer and Autumn and  
Winter, and all these old revolu-  
tions of earth;  
All new-old revolutions of Empire—  
change of the tide—what is all of  
it worth?

What the philosophies, all the sciences,  
poesy, varying voices of prayer,  
All that is noblest, all that is basest, all  
that is filthy with all that is fair?

What is it all, if we all of us end but in  
being our own corpse-coffins at  
last?

Swallow'd in Vastness, lost in Silence,  
drown'd in the deeps of a meaning-  
less Past?

What but a murmur of gnats in the  
gloom, or a moment's anger of  
bees in their hive? —

Peace, let it be! for I loved him, and love  
him for ever: the dead are not  
dead but alive. 1885.

#### MERLIN AND THE GLEAM <sup>1</sup>

O YOUNG Mariner,  
You from the haven  
Under the sea-cliff,  
You that are watching  
The gray Magician  
With eyes of wonder,  
I am Merlin,  
And I am dying,  
I am Merlin  
Who follow the Gleam.

Mighty the Wizard  
Who found me at sunrise  
Sleeping and woke me  
And learn'd me Magic!  
Great the Master,  
And sweet the Magic,  
When over the valley,  
In early summers,  
Over the mountain,  
On human faces,  
And all around me,  
Moving to melody,  
Floated the Gleam.

Once at the croak of a Raven who  
crossed it,  
A barbarous people,  
Blind to the magic  
And deaf to the melody,  
Snarl'd at and cursed me.  
A demon vexed me,  
The light retreated,  
The landskip darken'd,  
The melody deaden'd,  
The Master whisper'd  
"Follow the Gleam."

Then to the melody  
Over a wilderness  
Gliding, and glancing at  
Elf of the woodland,  
Gnome of the cavern,  
Griffin and Giant,  
And dancing of Fairies  
In desolate hollows,  
And wraiths of the mountain,  
And rolling of dragons  
By warble of water,  
Or cataract music  
Of falling torrents,  
Flitted the Gleam.

Down from the mountain,  
And over the level,  
And streaming and shining on  
Silent river,  
Silvery willow,  
Pasture and plowland,  
Innocent maidens,  
Garrulous children,  
Homestead and harvest,  
Reaper and gleaner,  
And rough-ruddy faces  
Of lowly labor,  
Slided the Gleam —

<sup>1</sup> See the *Life of Tennyson*, II, 366.



Then, with a melody  
Stronger and statelier,  
Led me at length  
To the city and palace  
Of Arthur the King;  
Touch'd at the golden  
Cross of the churches,  
Flash'd on the tournament,  
Flicker'd and bicker'd  
From helmet to helmet,  
And last on the forehead  
Of Arthur the blameless  
Rested the Gleam.

Clouds and darkness  
Closed upon Camelot;  
Arthur had vanish'd  
I knew not whither,  
The king who loved me,  
And cannot die;  
For out of the darkness  
Silent and slowly

The Gleam, that had waned to a wintry  
glimmer

On icy fallow  
And faded forest,  
Drew to the valley  
Named of the shadow,  
And slowly brightening  
Out of the glimmer,

And slowly moving again to a melody  
Yearningly tender,  
Fell on the shadow,  
No longer a shadow,  
But clothed with the Gleam.

And broader and brighter  
The Gleam flying onward,  
Wed to the melody,  
Sang thro' the world;  
And slower and fainter,  
Old and weary,  
But eager to follow,  
I saw, whenever  
In passing it glanced upon  
Hamlet or city,  
That under the Crosses  
The dead man's garden,  
The mortal hillock,  
Would break into blossom;  
And so to the land's  
Last limit I came —  
And can no longer,  
But die rejoicing,  
For thro' the Magic  
Of Him the Mighty,

Who taught me in childhood,  
There on the border  
Of boundless Ocean,  
And all but in Heaven  
Hovers the Gleam.

Not of the sunlight,  
Not of the moonlight,  
Not of the starlight!  
O young Mariner,  
Down to the haven,  
Call your companions,  
Launch your vessel  
And crowd your canvas,  
And, ere it vanishes  
Over the margin,  
After it, follow it,  
Follow the Gleam.

1889.

### FAR — FAR — AWAY

(FOR MUSIC)

WHAT sight so lured him thro' the fields  
he knew  
As where earth's green stole into heaven's  
own hue,  
Far — far — away?

What sound was dearest in his native  
dells?  
The mellow lin-lan-lone of evening bells  
Far — far — away.

What vague world-whisper, mystic pain  
or joy.  
Thro' those three words would haunt him  
when a boy,  
Far — far — away?

A whisper from his dawn of life? a  
breath  
From some fair dawn beyond the doors of  
death  
Far — far — away?

Far, far, how far? from o'er the gates of  
birth,  
The faint horizons, all the bounds of earth,  
Far — far — away?

What charm in words, a charm no words  
could give?  
O dying words, can Music make you live  
Far — far — away?

1889.

## THE THROSTLE

"SUMMER is coming, summer is coming.  
I know it, I know it, I know it.  
Light again, leaf again, life again, love  
again!"

Yes, my wild little Poet.

Sing the new year in under the blue.

Last year you sang it as gladly.

"New, new, new, new!" Is it then *so* new  
That you should carol so madly?

"Love again, song again, nest again,  
young again,"

Never a prophet so crazy!

And hardly a daisy as yet, little friend,  
See, there is hardly a daisy.

"Here again, here, here, here, happy  
year!"

O warble unchidden. unbidden!

Summer is coming, is coming, my dear,  
And all the winters are hidden.

1889.

## THE OAK

LIVE thy Life,  
Young and old,  
Like yon oak,  
Bright in spring,  
Living gold;

Summer-rich  
Then; and then  
Autumn-changed,  
Soberer-hued  
Gold again.

All his leaves

Fallen at length,

Look, he stands,

Trunk and bough,

Naked strength. 1889.

CROSSING THE BAR<sup>1</sup>

SUNSET and evening star,

And one clear call for me:

And may there be no moaning of the bar,  
When I put out to sea,

But such a tide as moving seems asleep,

Too full for sound and foam,

When that which drew from out the  
boundless deep

Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,

And after that the dark!

And may there be no sadness of farewell,  
When I embark;

For tho' from out our bourne of Time and  
Place

The flood may bear me far,

I hope to see my Pilot face to face

When I have crossed the bar. 1889.

<sup>1</sup> "*Crossing the Bar* was written in my father's eighty-first year, on a day in October. . . .

"I said. 'That is the crown of your life's work'; he answered, 'It came in a moment.' He explained the 'Pilot' as 'That Divine and Unseen Who is always guiding us.'"

"A few days before his death he said to me: 'Mind you put *Crossing the Bar* at the end of all editions of my poems.'"  
(*Life of Tennyson*, II, 367.)

# ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

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# ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

## THE CRY OF THE CHILDREN

“Φεῦ, φεῦ, τί προσδέρκεσθέ μ’ ὀμμασιν.  
τέκνα;” — *Medea*.

### I

Do ye hear the children weeping, O my  
brothers,

Ere the sorrow comes with years?

They are leaning their young heads  
against their mothers,

And *that* cannot stop their tears.

The young lambs are bleating in the  
meadows,

The young birds are chirping in the nest,  
The young fawns are playing with the  
shadows,

The young flowers are blowing toward  
the west —

But the young, young children, O my  
brothers,

They are weeping bitterly!

They are weeping in the playtime of the  
others,

In the country of the free.

### II

Do ye question the young children in  
the sorrow

Why their tears are falling so?

The old man may weep for his to-morrow  
Which is lost in Long Ago;

The old tree is leafless in the forest,

The old year is ending in the frost,

The old wound, if stricken, is the sorest,

The old hope is hardest to be lost:

But the young, young children, O my  
brothers,

Do you ask them why they stand  
Weeping sore before the bosoms of their  
mothers,

In our happy Fatherland?

### III

They look up with their pale and sunken  
faces,

And their looks are sad to see,  
For the man's hoary anguish draws and  
presses

Down the cheeks of infancy;  
“Your old earth,” they say, “is very  
dreary,

Our young feet,” they say, “are very  
weak;

Few paces have we taken, yet are weary —  
Our grave-rest is very far to seek:

Ask the aged why they weep, and not the  
children,

For the outside earth is cold,  
And we young ones stand without, in our  
bewildering,

And the graves are for the old.

### IV

“True,” say the children, “it may happen  
That we die before our time:

Little Alice died last year, her grave is  
shapen

Like a snowball, in the rime.

We looked into the pit prepared to take  
her;

Was no room for any work in the close  
clay!

From the sleep wherein she lieth none will  
wake her,

Crying, ‘Get up, little Alice! it is  
day.’

If you listen by that grave, in sun and  
shower,

With your ear down, little Alice never  
cries;

Could we see her face, be sure we should  
not know her,

For the smile has time for growing in  
her eyes:

And merry go her moments, lulled and  
stilled in

The shroud by the kirk-chime.  
"It is good when it happens," say the  
children,  
"That we die before our time."

## V

Alas, alas, the children! they are seeking  
Death in life, as best to have:  
They are binding up their hearts away  
from breaking,

With a cerement from the grave.  
Go out, children, from the mine and from  
the city,  
Sing out, children, as the little thrushes  
do;

Pluck your handfuls of the meadow-  
cowslips pretty.

Laugh aloud, to feel your fingers let  
them through!  
But they answer, "Are your cowslips of  
the meadows

Like our weeds anear the mine?  
Leave us quiet in the dark of the coal-  
shadows,

From your pleasures fair and fine!

## VI

"For oh," say the children, "we are  
weary,

And we cannot run or leap;  
If we cared for any meadows, it were  
merely

To drop down in them and sleep.  
Our knees tremble sorely in the stooping,  
We fall upon our faces, trying to go;

And, underneath our heavy eyelids droop-  
ing

The reddest flower would look as pale as  
snow.

For, all day, we drag our burden tiring  
Through the coal-dark, under-  
ground;

Or, all day, we drive the wheels of iron  
In the factories, round and round.

## VII

"For all day the wheels are droning,  
turning;

Their wind comes in our faces,  
Till our hearts turn, our heads with pulses  
burning,

And the walls turn in their places:

Turns the sky in the high window, blank  
and reeling,

Turns the long light that drops adown  
the wall,

Turn the black flies that crawl along the  
ceiling:

All are turning, all the day, and we with  
all.

And all day the iron wheels are droning,  
And sometimes we could pray,

'O ye wheels' (breaking out in a mad  
moaning),

'Stop! be silent for to-day!'

## VIII

Ay, be silent! Let them hear each other  
breathing

For a moment, mouth to mouth!  
Let them touch each other's hands, in a  
fresh wreathing

Of their tender human youth!  
Let them feel that this cold metallic  
motion

Is not all the life God fashions or reveals:  
Let them prove their living souls against  
the notion

That they live in you, or under you,  
O wheels!

Still, all day, the iron wheels go onward,  
Grinding life down from its mark;

And the children's souls, which God is  
calling sunward,

Spin on blindly in the dark.

## IX

Now tell the poor young children, O my  
brothers,

To look up to Him and pray;  
So the blessed One who blesseth all the  
others,

Will bless them another day.  
They answer, "Who is God that He  
should hear us,

While the rushing of the iron wheels is  
stirred?

When we sob aloud, the human creatures  
near us

Pass by, hearing not, or answer not a  
word.

And we hear not (for the wheels in their  
resounding)

Strangers speaking at the door:  
Is it likely God, with angels singing round  
Him,

Hears our weeping any more?



## X

"Two words, indeed, of praying we remember,

And at midnight's hour of harm,  
'Our Father,' looking upward in the chamber,

We say softly for a charm.<sup>1</sup>  
We know no other words except 'Our Father,'

And we think that, in some pause of angels' song,

God may pluck them with the silence sweet to gather,

And hold both within His right hand which is strong.

'Our Father!' If He heard us, He would surely

(For they call Him good and mild)  
Answer, smiling down the steep world very purely,

'Come and rest with me, my child.'

## XI

"But, no!" say the children, weeping faster,

"He is speechless as a stone:

And they tell us, of His image is the master

Who commands us to work on.

Go to!" say the children,— "up in Heaven,

Dark, wheel-like, turning clouds are all we find.

Do not mock us; grief has made us unbelieving:

We look up for God, but tears have made us blind."

Do you hear the children weeping and disproving,

O my brothers, what ye preach?

For God's possible is taught by His world's loving,

And the children doubt of each.

## XII

And well may the children weep before you!

They are weary ere they run;

<sup>1</sup> A fact rendered pathetically historical by Mr. Horne's report of his Commission. The name of the poet of "Orion" and "Cosmo de' Medici" has, however, a change of associations, and comes in time to remind me that we have some noble poetic heat of literature still, — however open to the reproach of being somewhat gelid in our humanity. (*Mrs. Browning.*)

They have never seen the sunshine, nor the glory

Which is brighter than the sun.

They know the grief of man, without its wisdom;

They sink in man's despair, without its calm;

Are slaves, without the liberty in Christdom,

Are martyrs, by the pang without the palm:

Are worn as if with age, yet unretrievably

The harvest of its memories cannot reap,—

Are orphans of the earthly love and heavenly.

Let them weep! let them weep!

## XIII

They look up with their pale and sunken faces,

And their look is dread to see,

For they mind you of their angels in high places,

With eyes turned on Deity.

"How long," they say, "how long, O cruel nation,

Will you stand, to move the world, on a child's heart, —

Stifle down with a mailed heel its palpitation,

And tread onward to your throne amid the mart?

Our blood splashes upward, O gold-heaper,

And your purple shows your path!

But the child's sob in the silence curses deeper

Than the strong man in his wrath."

1843.

## GRIEF

I TELL you, hopeless grief is passionless;  
That only men incredulous of despair,  
Half-taught in anguish, through the mid-night air

Beat upward to God's throne in loud access

Of shrieking and reproach. Full desert-ness,

In souls as countries, lieth silent-bare  
Under the blanching, vertical eye-glare  
Of the absolute Heavens. Deep-hearted man, express

Grief for thy Dead in silence like to death —

Most like a monumental statue set  
 In everlasting watch and moveless woe  
 Till itself crumble to the dust beneath.  
 Touch it; the marble eyelids are not wet:  
 If it could weep, it could arise and go.  
 1844.

### THE LADY'S "YES"

#### I

"YES," I answered you last night;  
 "No," this morning, sir, I say:  
 Colors seen by candle-light  
 Will not look the same by day.

#### II

When the viols played their best,  
 Lamps above and laughs below,  
*Love me* sounded like a jest,  
 Fit for *yes* or fit for *no*.

#### III

Call me false or call me free,  
 Vow, whatever light may shine, —  
 No man on your face shall see  
 Any grief for change on mine.

#### IV

Yet the sin is on us both;  
 Time to dance is not to woo;  
 Wooing light makes fickle troth,  
 Scorn of *me* recoils on *you*.

#### V

Learn to win a lady's faith  
 Nobly, as the thing is high,  
 Bravely, as for life and death,  
 With a loyal gravity.

#### VI

Lead her from the festive boards,  
 Point her to the starry skies;  
 Guard her, by your truthful words,  
 Pure from courtship's flatteries.

#### VII

By your truth she shall be true,  
 Ever true, as wives of yore;  
 And her *yes*, once said to you,  
 SHALL be *Yes* for evermore. 1844.

### THE ROMANCE OF THE SWAN'S NEST

"So the dreams depart,  
 So the fading phantoms flee,  
 And the sharp reality  
 Now must act its part."  
 — WESTWOOD'S *Beads from a Rosary*.

#### I

LITTLE Ellie sits alone  
 'Mid the beeches of a meadow,  
 By a stream-side on the grass,  
 And the trees are showering down  
 Doubles of their leaves in shadow  
 On her shining hair and face.

#### II

She has thrown her bonnet by,  
 And her feet she has been dipping  
 In the shallow water's flow:  
 Now she holds them nakedly  
 In her hands, all sleek and dripping,  
 While she rocketh to and fro.

#### III

Little Ellic sits alone,  
 And the smile she softly uses  
 Fills the silence like a speech,  
 While she thinks what shall be done,  
 And the sweetest pleasure chooses  
 For her future within reach.

#### IV

Little Ellie in her smile  
 Chooses — "I will have a lover  
 Riding on a steed of steeds:  
 He shall love me without guile,  
 And to *him* I will discover  
 The swan's nest among the reeds.

#### V

"And the steed shall be red-roan,  
 And the lover shall be noble,  
 With an eye that takes the breath:  
 And the lute he plays upon  
 Shall strike ladies into trouble,  
 As his sword strikes men to death.

#### VI

"And the steed it shall be shod  
 All in silver, housed in azure,  
 And the mane shall swim the wind;  
 And the hoofs along the sod  
 Shall flash onward and keep measure,  
 Till the shepherds look behind.

## VII

"But my lover will not prize  
 All the glory that he rides in,  
 When he gazes in my face:  
 He will say, 'O Love, thine eyes  
 Build the shrine my soul abides in,  
 And I kneel here for thy grace!'"

## VIII

"Then, ay, then he shall kneel low,  
 With the red-roan steed anear him  
 Which shall seem to understand,  
 Till I answer, 'Rise and go!  
 For the world must love and fear him  
 Whom I gift with heart and hand.'"

## IX

"Then he will arise so pale,  
 I shall feel my own lips tremble  
 With a yes I must not say,  
 Nathless maiden-brave, 'Farewell,'  
 I will utter, and dissemble —  
 'Light to-morrow with to-day!'"

## X

"Then he'll ride among the hills  
 To the wide world past the river,  
 There to put away all wrong;  
 To make straight distorted wills,  
 And to empty the broad quiver  
 Which the wicked bear along."

## XI

"Three times shall a young foot-page  
 Swim the stream and climb the mountain  
 And kneel down beside my feet —  
 'Lo, my master sends this gage,  
 Lady, for thy pity's counting!  
 What wilt thou exchange for it?'"

## XII

"And the first time I will send  
 A white rosebud for a guerdon,  
 And the second time, a glove;  
 But the third time — I may bend  
 From my pride, and answer — 'Pardon  
 If he comes to take my love.'"

## XIII

"Then the young foot-page will run,  
 Then my lover will ride faster,  
 Till he kneeleth at my knee:  
 'I am a duke's eldest son,  
 Thousand serfs do call me master,  
 But, O Love, I love but thee!'"

## XIV

"He will kiss me on the mouth  
 Then, and lead me as a lover  
 Through the crowds that praise his  
 deeds;  
 And, when soul-tied by one troth,  
 Unto *him* I will discover  
 That swan's nest among the reeds."

## XV

Little Ellie, with her smile  
 Not yet ended, rose up gaily,  
 Tied the bonnet, donned the shoe,  
 And went homeward, round a mile,  
 Just to see, as she did daily,  
 What more eggs were with the two.

## XVI

Pushing through the elm-tree copse,  
 Winding up the stream, light-hearted,  
 Where the osier pathway leads,  
 Past the boughs she stoops — and stops.  
 Lo, the wild swan had deserted,  
 And a rat had gnawed the reeds!

## XVII

Ellie went home sad and slow.  
 If she found the lover ever,  
 With his red-roan steed of steeds,  
 Sooth I know not; but I know  
 She could never show him — never,  
 That swan's nest among the reeds!  
 1844.

## THE DEAD PAN

Excited by Schiller's "Götter Griechenlands," and partly founded on a well-known tradition mentioned in a treatise of Plutarch ("De Oraculorum Defectu"), according to which, at the hour of the Savior's agony, a cry of "Great Pan is dead!" swept across the waves in the hearing of certain mariners, — and the oracles ceased.

It is in all veneration to the memory of the deathless Schiller that I oppose a doctrine still more dishonoring to poetry than to Christianity.

As Mr. Kenyon's graceful and harmonious paraphrase of the German poem was the first occasion of the turning of my thoughts in this direction, I take advantage of the pretence to indulge my feelings (which overflow on other grounds) by inscribing my lyric to that dear friend and relative, with the earnestness of appreciating esteem as well as of affectionate gratitude. (*Mrs. Browning.*)

## I

Gods of Hellas, gods of Hellas,  
 Can ye listen in your silence?  
 Can your mystic voices tell us  
 Where ye hide? In floating islands,

With a wind that evermore  
Keeps you out of sight of shore?  
Pan, Pan is dead.

## II

In what revels are ye sunken  
In old Æthiopia?  
Have the Pygmies made you drunken,  
Bathing in mandragora  
Your divine pale lips that shiver  
Like the lotus in the river?  
Pan, Pan is dead.

## III

Do ye sit there still in slumber,  
In gigantic Alpine rows?  
The black poppies out of number  
Nodding, dripping from your brows  
To the red lees of your wine,  
And so kept alive and fine?  
Pan, Pan is dead.

## IV

Or lie crushed your stagnant corpses  
Where the silver spheres roll on,  
Stung to life by centric forces  
Thrown like rays out from the sun? —  
While the smoke of your old altars  
Is the shroud that round you welters?  
Great Pan is dead.

## V

“Gods of Hellas, gods of Hellas”  
Said the old Hellenic tongue, —  
Said the hero-oaths, as well as  
Poets’ songs the sweetest sung:  
Have ye grown deaf in a day?  
Can ye speak not yea or nay,  
Since Pan is dead?

## VI

Do ye leave your rivers flowing  
All alone, O Naiades,  
While your drenched locks dry slow in  
This cold feeble sun and breeze?  
Not a word the Naiads say,  
Though the rivers run for aye;  
For Pan is dead.

## VII

From the gloaming of the oak-wood,  
O ye Dryads, could ye flee?  
At the rushing thunderstroke, would  
No sob tremble through the tree?  
Not a word the Dryads say,  
Though the forests wave for aye;  
For Pan is dead.

## VIII

Have ye left the mountain places,  
Oreads wild, for other tryst?  
Shall we see no sudden faces  
Strike a glory through the mist?  
Not a sound the silence thrills  
Of the everlasting hills:  
Pan, Pan is dead.

## IX

O twelve gods of Plato’s vision,  
Crowned to starry wanderings,  
With your chariots in procession  
And your silver clash of wings!  
Very pale ye seem to rise,  
Ghosts of Grecian deities,  
Now Pan is dead!

## X

Jove, that right hand is unloaded  
Whence the thunder did prevail,  
While in idiocy of godhead  
Thou art staring the stars pale!  
And thine eagle, blind and old,  
Roughs his feathers in the cold.  
Pan, Pan is dead.

## XI

Where, O Juno, is the glory  
Of thy regal look and tread?  
Will they lay, for evermore, thee  
On thy dim, strait, golden bed?  
Will thy queendom all lie hid  
Meekly under either lid?  
Pan, Pan is dead.

## XII

Ha, Apollo! floats his golden  
Hair all mist-like where he stands,  
While the Muses hang enfolding  
Knee and foot with faint wild hands?  
’Neath the clanging of thy bow,  
Niobe looked lost as thou!  
Pan, Pan is dead.

## XIII

Shall the casque with its brown iron  
Pallas’ broad blue eyes eclipse,  
And no hero take inspiring  
From the god-Greek of her lips?  
’Neath her olive dost thou sit,  
Mars the mighty, cursing it?  
Pan, Pan is dead.

## XIV

Bacchus, Bacchus! on the panther  
 He swoons, bound with his own vines;  
 And his Mænads slowly saunter,  
 Head aside, among the pines,  
 While they murmur dreamingly  
 "Evohe! — ah — evohe! —  
     Ah, Pan is dead!"

## XV

Neptune lies beside the trident,  
 Dull and senseless as a stone;  
 And old Pluto deaf and silent  
 Is cast out into the sun:  
 Ceres smileth stern thereat,  
 "We *all* now are desolate —  
     Now Pan is dead."

## XVI

Aphrodite! dead and driven  
 As thy native foam thou art;  
 With the cestus long done heaving  
 On the white calm of thine heart!  
*Ai Adonis!* at that shriek  
 Not a tear runs down her cheek —  
     Pan, Pan is dead.

## XVII

And the Loves, we used to know from  
 One another, huddled lie,  
 Frore as taken in a snow-storm,  
 Close beside her tenderly;  
 As if each had weakly tried  
 Once to kiss her as he died.  
     Pan, Pan is dead.

## XVIII

What, and Hermes? Time enthralleth  
 All thy cunning, Hermes, thus,  
 And the ivy blindly crawleth  
 Round thy brave caduceus?  
 Hast thou no new message for us,  
 Full of thunder and Jove-glories?  
     Nay, Pan is dead.

## XIX

Crown'd Cybele's great turret  
 Rocks and crumbles on her head;  
 Roar the lions of her chariot  
 Toward the wilderness, unfed:  
 Scornful children are not mute,—  
 "Mother, mother, walk afoot,  
     Since Pan is dead!"

## XX

In the fiery-hearted centre  
 Of the solemn universe,  
 Ancient Vesta,— who could enter  
 To consume thee with this curse?  
 Drop thy grey chin on thy knee,  
 O thou palsied Mystery!  
     For Pan is dead.

## XXI

Gods, we vainly do adjure you, —  
 Ye return nor voice nor sign!  
 Not a votary could secure you  
 Even a grave for your Divine:  
 Not a grave, to show thereby  
*Here these grey old gods do lie.*  
     Pan, Pan is dead.

## XXII

Even that Greece who took your wages  
 Calls the obolus outworn;  
 And the hoarse, deep-throated ages  
 Laugh your godships unto scorn:  
 And the poets do disclaim you,  
 Or grow colder if they name you —  
     And Pan is dead.

## XXIII

Gods bereavèd, gods belated,  
 With your purples rent asunder!  
 Gods discrowned and desecrated,  
 Disinherited of thunder!  
 Now, the goats may climb and crop  
 The soft grass on Ida's top —  
     Now Pan is dead.

## XXIV

Calm, of old, the bark went onward,  
 When a cry more loud than wind  
 Rose up, deepened, and swept sunward  
 From the pilèd Dark behind;  
 And the sun shrank and grew pale,  
 Breathed against by the great wail —  
     "Pan, Pan is dead."

## XXV

And the rowers from the benches  
 Fell, each shuddering on his face,  
 While departing Influences  
 Struck a cold back through the place;  
 And the shadow of the ship  
 Reeled along the passive deep —  
     "Pan, Pan is dead."



## XXVI

And that dismal cry rose slowly  
 And sank slowly through the air,  
 Full of spirit's melancholy  
 And eternity's despair!  
 And they heard the words it said —  
 PAN IS DEAD — GREAT PAN IS DEAD —  
                     PAN, PAN IS DEAD.

## XXVII

'Twas the hour when One in Sion  
 Hung for love's sake on a cross;  
 When His brow was chill with dying  
 And His soul was faint with loss;  
 When His priestly blood dropped down-  
     ward  
 And His kingly eyes looked throneward —  
                     Then, Pan was dead.

## XXVIII

By the love, He stood alone in,  
 His sole Godhead rose complete,  
 And the false gods fell down moaning  
 Each from off his golden seat;  
 All the false gods with a cry  
 Rendered up their deity —  
                     Pan, Pan was dead.

## XXIX

Wailing wide across the islands,  
 They rent, vest-like, their Divine;  
 And a darkness and a silence  
 Quenched the light of every shrine;  
 And Dodona's oak swang lonely  
 Henceforth, to the tempest only:  
                     Pan, Pan was dead.

## XXX

Pythia staggered, feeling o'er her  
 Her lost god's forsaking look;  
 Straight her eyeballs filmed with horror  
 And her crispy fillets shook  
 And her lips gasped, through their foam,  
 For a word that did not come.  
                     Pan, Pan was dead.

## XXXI

O ye vain false gods of Hellas,  
 Ye are silent evermore!  
 And I dash down this old chalice  
 Whence libations ran of yore.  
 See, the wine crawls in the dust  
 Wormlike — as your glories must,  
                     Since Pan is dead.

## XXXII

Get to dust, as common mortals,  
 By a common doom and track!  
 Let no Schiller from the portals  
 Of that Hades call you back,  
 Or instruct us to weep all  
 At your antique funeral.  
                     Pan, Pan is dead.

## XXXIII

By your beauty, which confesses  
 Some chief Beauty conquering you, —  
 By our grand heroic guesses  
 Through your falsehood at the True, —  
 We will weep *not!* earth shall roll  
 Heir to each god's aureole —  
                     And Pan is dead.

## XXXIV

Earth outgrows the mythic fancies  
 Sung beside her in her youth,  
 And those debonair romances  
 Sound but dull beside the truth.  
 Phœbus' chariot-course is run:  
 Look up, poets, to the sun!  
                     Pan, Pan is dead.

## XXXV

Christ hath sent us down the angels;  
 And the whole earth and the skies  
 Are illumed by altar-candles  
 Lit for blessed mysteries;  
 And a Priest's hand through creation  
 Waveth calm and consecration:  
                     And Pan is dead.

## XXXVI

Truth is fair: should we forgo it?  
 Can we sigh right for a wrong?  
 God Himself is the best Poet,  
 And the Real is His song.  
 Sing His truth out fair and full,  
 And secure His beautiful!  
                     Let Pan be dead!

## XXXVII

Truth is large: our aspiration  
 Scarce embraces half we be.  
 Shame, to stand in His creation  
 And Doubt truth's sufficiency! —  
 To think God's song unexcelling  
 The poor tales of our own telling —  
                     When Pan is dead!

## XXXVIII

What is true and just and honest,  
 What is lovely, what is pure,  
 All of praise that hath admonisht,  
 All of Virtue,— shall endure;  
 These are themes for poets' uses,  
 Stirring nobler than the Muses,  
     Ere Pan was dead.

## XXXIX

O brave poets, keep back nothing,  
 Nor mix falsehood with the whole!  
 Look up Godward; speak the truth in  
 Worthy song from earnest soul:  
 Hold, in high poetic duty,  
 Truest Truth the fairest Beauty!  
     Pan, Pan is dead.  
                     1844.

## A MAN'S REQUIREMENTS

## I

Love me, sweet, with all thou art,  
 Feeling, thinking, seeing;  
 Love me in the lightest part,  
 Love me in full being.

## II

Love me with thine open youth  
 In its frank surrender;  
 With the vowing of thy mouth,  
 With its silence tender.

## III

Love me with thine azure eyes,  
 Made for earnest granting;  
 Taking color from the skies,  
 Can Heaven's truth be wanting?

## IV

Love me with their lids, that fall  
 Snow-like at first meeting;  
 Love me with thine heart, that all  
 Neighbours then see beating.

## V

Love me with thine hand stretched out  
 Freely — open-minded:  
 Love me with thy loitering foot.—  
 Hearing one behind it.

## VI

Love me with thy voice, that turns  
 Sudden faint above me;  
 Love me with thy blush that burns  
 When I murmur *Love me!*

## VII

Love me with thy thinking soul,  
 Break it to love-sighing;  
 Love me with thy thoughts that roll  
 On through living — dying.

## VIII

Love me in thy gorgeous airs,  
 When the world has crowned thee;  
 Love me, kneeling at thy prayers,  
 With the angels round thee.

## IX

Love me pure, as musers do,  
 Up the woodlands shady:  
 Love me gaily, fast and true,  
 As a winsome lady.

## X

Through all hopes that keep us brave,  
 Farther off or nigher,  
 Love me for the house and grave,  
 And for something higher.

## XI

Thus, if thou wilt prove me, Dear,  
 Woman's love no fable,  
*I will love thee* — half a year —  
 As a man is able.                      1846.

SONNETS FROM THE  
PORTUGUESE <sup>1</sup>

## I

I THOUGHT once how Theocritus had sung  
 Of the sweet years, the dear and wished-  
     for years,  
 Who each one in a gracious hand appears  
 To bear a gift for mortals, old or young:  
 And, as I mused it in his antique tongue,  
 I saw, in gradual vision through my tears,  
 The sweet, sad years, the melancholy  
     years,

<sup>1</sup> See the Letters of Elizabeth Barrett Browning,  
 I, 316-317.

Those of my own life, who by turns had  
 flung  
 A shadow across me. Straightway I was  
 'ware,  
 So weeping, how a mystic Shape did move  
 Behind me, and drew me backward by  
 the hair;  
 And a voice said in mastery, while I  
 strove,—  
 "Guess now who holds thee?"—  
 "Death," I said. But, there,  
 The silver answer rang,—"Not Death,  
 but Love."

## II

BUT only three in all God's universe  
 Have heard this word thou hast said,—  
 Himself, beside  
 Thee speaking, and me listening! and  
 replied  
 One of us . . . *that* was God, . . . and  
 laid the curse  
 So darkly on my eyelids, as to amerce  
 My sight from seeing thee,—that if I had  
 died,  
 The deathweights, placed there, would  
 have signified  
 Less absolute exclusion. "Nay" is  
 worse  
 From God than from all others, O my  
 friend!  
 Men could not part us with their worldly  
 jars,  
 Nor the seas change us, nor the tempests  
 bend;  
 Our hands would touch for all the  
 mountain-bars:  
 And, heaven being rolled between us at  
 the end,  
 We should but vow the faster for the  
 stars.

III<sup>1</sup>

UNLIKE are we, unlike, O princely Heart!  
 Unlike our uses and our destinies.  
 Our ministering two angels look surprise  
 On one another, as they strike athwart  
 Their wings in passing. Thou, bethink  
 thee, art  
 A guest for queens to social pageantries,  
 With gages from a hundred brighter eyes  
 Than tears even can make mine, to play  
 thy part

<sup>1</sup> See the Letters of Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett Barrett, I, 74-75. (May 24, 1845.)

Of chief musician. What hast *thou* to do  
 With looking from the lattice-lights at me,  
 A poor, tired, wandering singer, singing  
 through  
 The dark, and leaning up a cypress tree?  
 The chrism is on thine head,—on mine,  
 the dew,—  
 And Death must dig the level where these  
 agree.

## V

I LIFT my heavy heart up solemnly,  
 As once Electra her sepulchral urn,  
 And looking in thine eyes, I overturn  
 The ashes at thy feet. Behold and see  
 What a great heap of grief lay hid in me,  
 And how the red wild sparkles dimly burn  
 Through the ashen grayness. If thy foot  
 in scorn  
 Could tread them out to darkness utterly,  
 It might be well perhaps. But if instead  
 Thou wait beside me for the wind to blow  
 The gray dust up, . . . those laurels on  
 thine head,  
 O my Belovèd, will not shield thee so,  
 That none of all the fires shall scorch and  
 shred  
 'The hair beneath. Stand farther off  
 then! go.

VI<sup>1</sup>

Go from me. Yet I feel that I shall stand  
 Henceforward in thy shadow. Never-  
 more  
 Alone upon the threshold of my door  
 Of individual life, I shall command  
 The uses of my soul, nor lift my hand  
 Serenely in the sunshine as before,  
 Without the sense of that which I for-  
 bore—  
 Thy touch upon the palm. The widest  
 land  
 Doom takes to part us, leaves thy heart  
 in mine  
 With pulses that beat double. What I do  
 And what I dream include thee, as the  
 wine  
 Must taste of its own grapes. And when  
 I sue  
 God for myself, He hears that name of  
 thine,  
 And sees within my eyes the tears of two.

<sup>1</sup> See the Letters of R. B. and E. B. B., I, 74-75 and 144.

## VII

THE face of all the world is changed, I  
 think,  
 Since first I heard the footsteps of thy soul  
 Move still, oh, still, beside me, as they  
 stole  
 Betwixt me and the dreadful outer brink  
 Of obvious death, where I, who thought  
 to sink,  
 Was caught up into love, and taught the  
 whole  
 Of life in a new rhythm. The cup of dole  
 God gave for baptism, I am fain to drink,  
 And praise its sweetness, Sweet, with thee  
 anear.  
 The names of country, heaven, are  
 changed away  
 For where thou art or shalt be, there or  
 here;  
 And this . . . this lute and song . . .  
 loved yesterday,  
 (The singing angels know) are only dear  
 Because thy name moves right in what  
 they say.

VIII<sup>1</sup>

WHAT can I give thee back, O liberal  
 And princely giver, who hast brought the  
 gold  
 And purple of thine heart, unstained,  
 untold,  
 And laid them on the outside of the wall  
 For such as I to take or leave withal,  
 In unexpected largesse? am I cold,  
 Ungrateful, that for these most manifold  
 High gifts, I render nothing back at all?  
 Not so; not cold,— but very poor instead.  
 Ask God who knows. For frequent tears  
 have run  
 The colors from my life, and left so dead  
 And pale a stuff, it were not fitly done  
 To give the same as pillow to thy head.  
 Go farther! let it serve to trample on.

## IX

CAN it be right to give what I can give?  
 To let thee sit beneath the fall of tears  
 As salt as mine, and hear the sighing  
 years  
 Re-sighing on my lips renunciative  
 Through those infrequent smiles which  
 fail to live

<sup>1</sup> With this Sonnet and the next, compare the Letters, I, 183-185.

For all thy adjurations? O my fears,  
 That this can scarce be right! We are  
 not peers,  
 So to be lovers; and I own, and grieve,  
 That givers of such gifts as mine are, must  
 Be counted with the ungenerous. Out,  
 alas!  
 I will not soil thy purple with my dust,  
 Nor breathe my poison on thy Venice-  
 glass,  
 Nor give thee any love—which were  
 unjust.  
 Beloved, I only love thee! let it pass.

## X

YET, love, mere love, is beautiful indeed  
 And worthy of acceptance. Fire is  
 bright,  
 Let temple burn, or flax; an equal light  
 Leaps in the flame from cedar-plank or  
 weed:  
 And love is fire. And when I say at need  
*I love thee . . . mark! . . . I love thee—*  
*in thy sight*  
 I stand transfigured, glorified aright,  
 With conscience of the new rays that  
 proceed  
 Out of my face toward thine. There's  
 nothing low  
 In love, when love the lowest: meanest  
 creatures  
 Who love God, God accepts while loving  
 so.  
 And what I *feel*, across the inferior  
 features  
 Of what I *am*, doth flash itself, and show  
 How that great work of Love enhances  
 Nature's.

## XII

INDEED this very love which is my boast,  
 And which, when rising up from breast to  
 brow,  
 Doth crown me with a ruby large enow  
 To draw men's eyes and prove the inner  
 cost,—  
 This love even, all my worth, to the utter-  
 most,  
 I should not love withal, unless that thou  
 Hadst set me an example, shown me  
 how,  
 When first thine earnest eyes with mine  
 were crossed,  
 And love called love. And thus, I can-  
 not speak

Of love even, as a good thing of my  
own :  
Thy soul hath snatched up mine all faint  
and weak,  
And placed it by thee on a golden  
throne,—  
And that I love (O soul, we must be  
meek !)  
Is by thee only, whom I love alone.

## XIII

AND wilt thou have me fashion into  
speech  
The love I bear thee, finding words  
enough,  
And hold the torch out, while the winds  
are rough,  
Between our faces, to cast light on  
each? —  
I drop it at thy feet. I cannot teach  
My hand to hold my spirit so far off  
From myself — me — that I should bring  
thee proof  
In words, of love hid in me out of reach.  
Nay, let the silence of my womanhood  
Commend my woman-love to thy be-  
lief, —  
Seeing that I stand unwon, however  
wooed,  
And rend the garment of my life, in brief,  
By a most dauntless, voiceless fortitude,  
Lest one touch of this heart convey its  
grief.

XIV<sup>1</sup>

IF thou must love me, let it be for nought  
Except for love's sake only. Do not say  
"I love her for her smile — her look —  
her way  
Of speaking gently, — for a trick of  
thought  
That falls in well with mine, and certes  
brought  
A sense of pleasant ease on such a day" —  
For these things in themselves, Belovèd,  
may  
Be changed, or change for thee, — and  
love, so wrought,  
May be unwrought so. Neither love me  
for  
Thine own dear pity's wiping my cheeks  
dry, —  
A creature might forget to weep, who bore

Thy comfort long, and lose thy love  
thereby!  
But love me for love's sake, that ever-  
more  
Thou mayst love on, through love's eter-  
nity.

XVI<sup>1</sup>

AND yet, because thou overcomest so,  
Because thou art more noble and like a  
king,  
Thou canst prevail against my fears and  
fling  
Thy purple round me, till my heart shall  
grow  
Too close against thine heart henceforth  
to know  
How it shook when alone. Why, con-  
quering  
May prove as lordly and complete a thing  
In lifting upward, as in crushing low!  
And as a vanquished soldier yields his  
sword  
To one who lifts him from the bloody  
earth,  
Even so, Belovèd, I at last record,  
Here ends my strife. If *thou* invite me  
forth,  
I rise above abasement at the word.  
Make thy love larger to enlarge my worth.

## XVII

MY poet, thou canst touch on all the notes  
God set between His After and Before,  
And strike up and strike off the general  
roar  
Of the rushing worlds a melody that floats  
In a serene air purely. Antidotes  
Of medicated music, answering for  
Mankind's forlornest uses, thou canst pour  
From thence into their ears. God's will  
devotes  
Thine to such ends, and mine to wait on  
thine.  
How, Dearest, wilt thou have me for  
most use?  
A hope, to sing by gladly? or a fine  
Sad memory, with thy songs to inter-  
fuse?  
A shade, in which to sing — of palm or  
pine?  
A grave, on which to rest from singing?  
Choose.

<sup>1</sup> Compare the Letters, I, 256, 274-5, 506, 508.<sup>1</sup> Compare the Letters, I, 545.



## XVIII

I NEVER gave a lock of hair away  
 To a man, Dearest, except this to thee,  
 Which now upon my fingers thought-  
   fully,  
 I ring out to the full brown length and say  
 "Take it." My day of youth went yes-  
   terday:  
 My hair no longer bounds to my foot's  
   glee,  
 Nor plant I it from rose or myrtle-tree,  
 As girls do, any more; it only may  
 Now shade on two pale cheeks the mark of  
   tears,  
 Taught drooping from the head that  
   hangs aside  
 Through sorrow's trick. I thought the  
   funeral-shears  
 Would take this first, but love is justi-  
   fied,—  
 Take it thou, finding pure, from all those  
   years,  
 The kiss my mother left here when she  
   died.

## XIX

THE soul's Rialto hath its merchandise;  
 I barter curl for curl upon that mart,  
 And from my poet's forehead to my heart  
 Receive this lock which outweighs ar-  
   goses,—  
 As purple black, as erst to Pindar's eyes  
 The dim purpureal tresses gloomed  
   athwart  
 The nine white Muse-brows. For this  
   counterpart,  
 The bay-crown's shade, Belovèd, I sur-  
   mise,  
 Still lingers on thy curl, it is so black!  
 Thus, with a fillet of smooth-kissing  
   breath,  
 I tie the shadows safe from gliding back,  
 And lay the gift where nothing hin-  
   dereth;  
 Here on my heart, as on thy brow, to  
   lack  
 No natural heat till mine grows cold in  
   death.

XX<sup>1</sup>

BELOVED, my Belovèd, when I think  
 That thou wast in the world a year ago.  
 What time I sat alone here in the snow

<sup>1</sup> Compare the Letters, I, 147.

And saw no footprint, heard the silence  
   sink  
 No moment at thy voice, but, link by  
   link,  
 Went counting all my chains as if that  
   so  
 They never could fall off at any blow  
 Struck by thy possible hand,— why, thus  
   I drink  
 Of life's great cup of wonder! Wonder-  
   ful,  
 Never to feel thee thrill the day or night  
 With personal act or speech,— nor ever  
   cull  
 Some prescience of thee with the blos-  
   soms white  
 Thou sawest growing! Atheists are as  
   dull,  
 Who cannot guess God's presence out of  
   sight.

XXI<sup>1</sup>

SAY over again, and yet once over again,  
 That thou dost love me. Though the  
   word repeated  
 Should seem "a cuckoo-song," as thou  
   dost treat it,  
 Remember, never to the hill or plain,  
 Valley and wood, without her cuckoo-  
   strain  
 Comes the fresh Spring in all her green  
   completed.  
 Belovèd, I, amid the darkness greeted  
 By a doubtful spirit-voice, in that doubt's  
   pain  
 Cry, "Speak once more — thou lovest!"  
   Who can fear  
 Too many stars, though each in heaven  
   shall roll,  
 Too many flowers, though each shall  
   crown the year?  
 Say thou dost love me, love me, love me  
   — toll  
 The silver iterance! — only minding,  
   Dear,  
 To love me also in silence with thy soul.

## XXII

WHEN our two souls stand up erect and  
   strong,  
 Face to face, silent, drawing nigh and  
   nigher,  
 Until the lengthening wings break into fire

<sup>1</sup> Compare the Letters, I, 336.

At either curvèd point,—what bitter  
     wrong  
 Can the earth do to us, that we should  
     not long  
 Be here contented? Think. In mount-  
     ing higher,  
 The angels would press on us and aspire  
 To drop some golden orb of perfect song  
 Into our deep, dear silence. Let us stay  
 Rather on earth, Belovèd,—where the  
     unfit  
 Contrarious moods of men recoil away  
 And isolate pure spirits, and permit  
 A place to stand and love in for a day,  
 With darkness and the death-hour round-  
     ing it.

XXIII<sup>1</sup>

Is it indeed so? If I lay here dead,  
 Wouldst thou miss any life in losing  
     mine?  
 And would the sun for thee more coldly  
     shine  
 Because of grave-damps falling round my  
     head?  
 I marvelled, my Belovèd, when I read  
 Thy thought so in the letter. I am  
     thine—  
 But . . . so much to thee? Can I pour  
     thy wine  
 While my hands tremble? Then my  
     soul, instead  
 Of dreams of death, resumes life's lower  
     range.  
 Then, love me, Love! look on me—  
     breathe on me!  
 As brighter ladies do not count it strange,  
 For love, to give up acres and degree,  
 I yield the grave for thy sake, and ex-  
     change  
 My near sweet view of Heaven, for earth  
     with thee!

## XXVI

I LIVED with visions for my company  
 Instead of men and women, years ago,  
 And found them gentle mates, nor  
     thought to know  
 A sweeter music than they played to me.  
 But soon their trailing purple was not  
     free  
 Of this world's dust, their lutes did silent  
     grow,

And I myself grew faint and blind below  
 Their vanishing eyes. Then THOU didst  
     come—to be,  
 Belovèd, what they seemed. Their  
     shining fronts,  
 Their songs, their splendors (better, yet  
     the same,  
 As river-water hallowed into fonts),  
 Met in thee, and from out thee overcame  
 My soul with satisfaction of all wants:  
 Because God's gifts put man's best  
     dreams to shame.

XXVII<sup>1</sup>

My own Belovèd, who hast lifted me  
 From this drear flat of earth where I was  
     thrown,  
 And, in betwixt the languid ringlets,  
     blown  
 A life-breath, till the forehead hopefully  
 Shines out again, as all the angels see,  
 Before thy saving kiss! My own, my  
     own,  
 Who camest to me when the world was  
     gone,  
 And I who looked for only God, found  
     thee!  
 I find thee; I am safe, and strong, and  
     glad.  
 As one who stands in dewless asphodel  
 Looks backward on the tedious time he  
     had  
 In the upper life,—so I, with bosom-  
     swell,  
 Make witness, here, between the good and  
     bad,  
 That Love, as strong as Death, retrieves  
     as well.

XXVIII<sup>2</sup>

My letters! all dead paper, mute and  
     white!  
 And yet they seem alive and quivering  
 Against my tremulous hands which loose  
     the string  
 And let them drop down on my knee to-  
     night.  
 This said,—he wished to have me in his  
     sight  
 Once, as a friend: this fixed a day in  
     spring  
 To come and touch my hand . . . a  
     simple thing,

<sup>1</sup> Compare the Letters, I, 395.<sup>2</sup> Compare the Letters, I, 6, 70, 365.<sup>1</sup> Compare the Letters, I, 337, 345, 350.

Yet I wept for it!—this, . . . the  
paper's light . . .

Said *Dear, I love thee*; and I sank and  
quailed

As if God's future thundered on my past.  
This said, *I am thine*—and so its ink has  
paled

With lying at my heart that beat too fast.  
And this . . . O Love, thy words have ill  
availed

If, what this said, I dared repeat at last!

## XXXI

THOU comest! all is said without a word.  
I sit beneath thy looks as children do

In the noon-sun, with souls that tremble  
through

Their happy eyelids from an unaverred  
Yet prodigal inward joy. Behold, I erred

In that last doubt! and yet I cannot rue  
The sin most, but the occasion—that we  
two

Should for a moment stand unministered  
By a mutual presence. Ah, keep near  
and close,

Thou dovelike help! and, when my fears  
would rise,

With thy broad heart serenely interpose:  
Brood down with thy divine sufficiencies

These thoughts which tremble when  
bereft of those,

Like callow birds left desert to the skies.

## XXXII

THE first time that the sun rose on thine  
oath

To love me, I looked forward to the moon  
To slacken all those bonds which seemed  
too soon

And quickly tied to make a lasting troth.  
Quick-loving hearts, I thought, may  
quickly loathe;

And, looking on myself, I seemed not one  
For such man's love;—more like an out-  
of-tune

Worn viol, a good singer would be wroth  
To spoil his song with, and which,  
snatched in haste,

Is laid down at the first ill-sounding note.  
I did not wrong myself so, but I placed  
A wrong on *thee*. For perfect strains may  
float

'Neath master-hands, from instruments  
defaced,—

And great souls, at one stroke, may do and  
doat.

## XXXV

IF I leave all for thee, wilt thou exchange  
And be all to me? Shall I never miss

Home-talk and blessing and the common  
kiss

That comes to each in turn, nor count it  
strange,

When I look up, to drop on a new range  
Of walls and floors, another home than  
this?

Nay, wilt thou fill that place by me  
which is

Filled by dead eyes too tender to know  
change?

That's hardest. If to conquer love, has  
tried,

To conquer grief, tries more, as all things  
prove;

For grief indeed is love and grief beside.  
Alas, I have grieved so I am hard to  
love.

Yet love me—wilt thou? Open thine  
heart wide.

And fold within the wet wings of thy  
dove.

## XXXVI

WHEN we met first and loved, I did not  
build

Upon the event with marble. Could it  
mean

To last, a love set pendulous between  
Sorrow and sorrow? Nay, I rather  
thrilled,

Distrusting every light that seemed to  
gild

The onward path, and feared to over-  
lean

A finger even. And, though I have  
grown serene

And strong since then, I think that God  
has willed

A still renewable fear . . . O love, O  
troth . . .

Lest these enclaspèd hands should never  
hold,

This mutual kiss drop down between us  
both

As an unowned thing, once the lips being  
cold.

And Love, be false! if *he*, to keep one  
oath,

Must lose one joy, by his life's star fore-  
told.

## XXXVIII

FIRST time he kissed me, he but only  
 kissed  
 The fingers of this hand wherewith I  
 write;  
 And ever since, it grew more clean and  
 white,  
 Slow to world-greetings, quick with its  
 "Oh, list,"  
 When the angels speak. A ring of  
 amethyst  
 I could not wear here, plainer to my sight,  
 Than the first kiss. The second passed  
 in height  
 The first, and sought the forehead, and  
 half missed,  
 Half falling on the hair. O beyond  
 meed!  
 That was the chrim of love, which love's  
 own crown,  
 With sanctifying sweetness, did precede.  
 The third upon my lips was folded down  
 In perfect, purple state; since when, in-  
 deed,  
 I have been proud and said, "My love,  
 my own."

## XXXIX

BECAUSE thou hast the power and own'st  
 the grace  
 To look through and behind this mask of  
 me  
 (Against which years have beat thus  
 blanchingly  
 With their rains), and behold my soul's  
 true face,  
 The dim and weary witness of life's  
 race,—  
 Because thou hast the faith and love to  
 see,  
 Through that same soul's distracting  
 lethargy,  
 The patient angel waiting for a place  
 In the new Heavens,—because nor sin  
 nor woe,  
 Nor God's infliction, nor death's neigh-  
 borhood,  
 Nor all which others viewing, turn to go,  
 Nor all which makes me tired of all, self-  
 viewed,—  
 Nothing repels thee, . . . Dearest, teach  
 me so  
 To pour out gratitude, as thou dost,  
 good!

## XLI

I THANK all who have loved me in their  
 hearts,  
 With thanks and love from mine. Deep  
 thanks to all  
 Who paused a little near the prison-wall  
 To hear my music in its louder parts  
 Ere they went onward, each one to the  
 mart's  
 Or temple's occupation, beyond call.  
 But thou, who, in my voice's sink and fall  
 When the sob took it, thy divinest Art's  
 Own instrument didst drop down at thy  
 foot  
 To hearken what I said between my  
 tears, . . .  
 Instruct me how to thank thee! Oh, to  
 shoot  
 My soul's full meaning into future years,  
 That *they* should lend it utterance, and  
 salute  
 Love that endures, from Life that dis-  
 appears!

## XLII

"*My future will not copy fair my past*"—<sup>1</sup>  
 I wrote that once; and thinking at my side  
 My ministering life-angel justified  
 The word by his appealing look upcast  
 To the white throne of God, I turned at  
 last,  
 And there, instead, saw thee, not unallied  
 To angels in thy soul! Then I, long  
 tried  
 By natural ills, received the comfort fast,  
 While budding, at thy sight, my pilgrim's  
 staff  
 Gave out green leaves with morning dews  
 impearled.  
 I seek no copy now of life's first half:  
 Leave here the pages with long musing  
 curled,  
 And write me new my future's epigraph,  
 New angel mine, unhopd for in the world!

## XLIII

How do I love thee? Let me count the  
 ways.  
 I love thee to the depth and breadth and  
 height  
 My soul can reach, when feeling out of  
 sight

<sup>1</sup> A sonnet of Mrs. Browning's, of 1844, begins with this line. See also the Letters, I, 281.

For the ends of Being and ideal Grace.  
 I love thee to the level of everyday's  
 Most quiet need, by sun and candle-light.  
 I love thee freely, as men strive for Right;  
 I love thee purely, as they turn from  
 Praise.

I love thee with the passion put to use  
 In my old griefs, and with my childhood's  
 faith.

I love thee with a love I seemed to lose  
 With my lost saints,— I love thee with  
 the breath,

Smiles, tears, of all my life! — and, if God  
 choose,

I shall but love thee better after death.

## XLIV

BELOV'D, thou hast brought me many  
 flowers

Plucked in the garden, all the summer  
 through

And winter, and it seemed as if they grew  
 In this close room, nor missed the sun and  
 showers.

So, in the like name of that love of ours,  
 Take back these thoughts which here un-  
 folded too,

And which on warm and cold days I  
 withdrew

From my heart's ground. Indeed, those  
 beds and bowers

Be overgrown with bitter weeds and rue,  
 And wait thy weeding; yet here's eglan-  
 tine,

Here's ivy: — take them, as I used to do  
 Thy flowers, and keep them where they  
 shall not pine.

Instruct thine eyes to keep their colors  
 true,

And tell thy soul their roots are left in  
 mine. [1847.] 1850.

## LIFE AND LOVE

## I

FAST this life of mine was dying,  
 Blind already and calm as death,  
 Snowflakes on her bosom lying  
 Scarcely heaving with her breath.

## II

Love came by, and having known her  
 In a dream of fabled lands,  
 Gently stopped, and laid upon her  
 Mystic chrism of holy hands;

## III

Drew his smile across her folded  
 Eyelids, as the swallow dips;  
 Breathed as finely as the cold did  
 Through the locking of her lips.

## IV

So, when Life looked upward, being  
 Warmed and breathed on from above,  
 What sight could she have for seeing,  
 Evermore . . . but only LOVE?

1850.

## INCLUSIONS

## I

Oh, wilt thou have my hand, Dear, to lie  
 along in thine?

As a little stone in a running stream, it  
 seems to lie and pine.

Now drop the poor pale hand, Dear, unfit  
 to plight with thine.

## II

Oh, wilt thou have my cheek, Dear, drawn  
 closer to thine own?

My cheek is white, my cheek is worn, by  
 many a tear run down.

Now leave a little space, Dear, lest it  
 should wet thine own.

## III

Oh, must thou have my soul, Dear, com-  
 mingled with thy soul? —

Red grows the cheek, and warm the hand;  
 the part is in the whole:

Nor hands nor cheeks keep separate, when  
 soul is joined to soul.

1850.

## INSUFFICIENCY

## I

THERE is no one beside thee and no one  
 above thee,

Thou standest alone as the nightingale  
 sings!

And my words that would praise thee  
 are impotent things,

For none can express thee though all  
 should approve thee.

I love thee so, Dear, that I only can  
 love thee.



## II

Say, what can I do for thee? weary thee,  
grieve thee?

Lean on thy shoulder, new burdens to  
add?

Weep my tears over thee, making thee  
sad?

Oh, hold me not — love me not! let me  
retrieve thee.

I love thee so, Dear, that I only can  
leave thee. 1850.

## QUESTION AND ANSWER

## I

LOVE you seek for, presupposes

Summer heat and sunny glow.

Tell me, do you find moss-roses

Budding, blooming in the snow?

Snow might kill the rose-tree's root —

Shake it quickly from your foot,

Lest it harm you as you go.

## II

From the ivy where it dapples

A grey ruin, stone by stone,

Do you look for grapes or apples,

Or for sad green leaves alone?

Pluck the leaves off, two or three —

Keep them for morality

When you shall be safe and gone.

1856.

## A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT

## I

WHAT was he doing, the great god Pan,

Down in the reeds by the river?

Spreading ruin and scattering ban,

Splashing and paddling with hoofs of a  
goat,

And breaking the golden lilies afloat

With the dragon-fly on the river.

## II

He tore out a reed, the great god Pan,

From the deep cool bed of the river:

The limpid water turbidly ran,

And the broken lilies a-dying lay,  
And the dragon-fly had fled away,  
Ere he brought it out of the river.

## III

High on the shore sat the great god Pan

While turbidly flowed the river;

And hacked and hewed as a great god can,

With his hard bleak steel at the patient  
reed,

Till there was not a sign of the leaf indeed  
To prove it fresh from the river.

## IV

He cut it short, did the great god Pan,

(How tall it stood in the river!)

Then drew the pith, like the heart of a  
man,

Steadily from the outside ring,

And notched the poor dry empty thing

In holes, as he sat by the river.

## V

"This is the way," laughed the great god  
Pan

(Laughed while he sat by the river),

"The only way, since gods began

To make sweet music, they could suc-  
ceed."

Then, dropping his mouth to a hole in the  
reed,

He blew in power by the river.

## VI

Sweet, sweet, sweet, O Pan!

Piercing sweet by the river!

Blinding sweet, O great god Pan!

The sun on the hill forgot to die,

And the lilies revived, and the dragon-fly  
Came back to dream on the river.

## VII

Yet half a beast is the great god Pan,

To laugh as he sits by the river,

Making a poet out of a man:

The true gods sigh for the cost and pain,—

For the reed which grows nevermore again  
As a reed with the reeds in the river.

1860.

# ROBERT BROWNING

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## ROBERT BROWNING

### SONGS FROM PARACELSUS

HEAP cassia, sandal-buds and stripes  
Of labdanum, and aloe-balls,  
Smeared with dull nard an Indian wipes  
From out her hair: such balsam falls  
Down sea-side mountain pedestals,  
From tree-tops where tired winds are  
fain,  
Spent with the vast and howling main,  
To treasure half their island-gain.

And strew faint sweetness from some  
old  
Egyptian's fine worm-eaten shroud  
Which breaks to dust when once un-  
rolled;  
Or shredded perfume, like a cloud  
From closet long to quiet vowed,  
With moth and dropping arras hung,  
Mouldering her lute and books among,  
As when a queen, long dead, was young.

---

OVER the sea our galleys went,  
With cleaving prows in order brave  
To a speeding wind and a bounding  
wave,  
A gallant armament:  
Each bark built out of a forest-tree  
Left leafy and rough as first it grew.  
And nailed all over the gaping sides,  
Within and without, with black bull-  
hides,  
Seethed in fat and suppld in flame,  
To bear the playful billows' game:  
So, each good ship was rude to see,  
Rude and bare to the outward view,  
But each upbore a stately tent  
Where cedar pales in scented row  
Kept out the flakes of the dancing  
brine,

And an awning drooped the mast be-  
low,  
In fold on fold of the purple fine,  
That neither noontide nor starshine  
Nor moonlight cold which maketh mad  
Might pierce the regal tenement.  
When the sun dawned, oh, gay and glad  
We set the sail and plied the oar;  
But when the night-wind blew like  
breath,  
For joy of one day's voyage more,  
We sang together on the wide sea,  
Like men at peace on a peaceful shore;  
Each sail was loosed to the wind so  
free,  
Each helm made sure by the twilight  
star,  
And in a sleep as calm as death,  
We, the voyagers from afar,  
Lay stretched along, each weary crew  
In a circle round its wondrous tent  
Whence gleamed soft light and curled  
rich scent,  
And with light and perfume, music  
too:  
So the stars wheeled round, and the dark-  
ness past,  
And at morn we started beside the  
mast,  
And still each ship was sailing fast.  
  
Now, one morn, land appeared — a speck  
Dim trembling betwixt sea and sky:  
"Avoid it," cried our pilot, "check  
The shout, restrain the eager eye!"  
But the heaving sea was black behind  
For many a night and many a day,  
And land, though but a rock, drew nigh;  
So, we broke the cedar pales away,  
Let the purple awning flap in the wind,  
And a statue bright was on every  
deck!

We shouted, every man of us,  
And steered right into the harbor thus,  
With pomp and pæan glorious.

A hundred shapes of lucid stone !

All day we built its shrine for each,  
A shrine of rock for every one,  
Nor paused till in the westerling sun

We sat together on the beach  
To sing because our task was done,  
When lo ! what shouts and merry songs !  
What laughter all the distance stirs !

A loaded raft with happy throngs  
Of gentle islanders !

"Our isles are just at hand," they cried,  
"Like cloudlets faint in even sleeping.

Our temple-gates are opened wide,  
Our olive-groves thick shade are keep-  
ing

For these majestic forms" — they cried.  
Oh, then we awoke with sudden start

From our deep dream, and knew, too  
late,

How bare the rock, how desolate,  
Which had received our precious freight

Yet we called out — "Depart !

Our gifts, once given, must here abide.

Our work is done; we have no heart  
To mar our work," — we cried.

1835.

#### PORPHYRIA'S LOVER <sup>1</sup>

THE rain set early in to-night,

The sullen wind was soon awake,

It tore the elm-tops down for spite,

And did its worst to vex the lake :

I listened with heart fit to break.

When glided in Porphyria; straight

She shut the cold out and the storm,

And kneeled and made the cheerless  
grate

Blaze up, and all the cottage warm;

Which done, she rose, and from her form

<sup>1</sup> This is the earliest of Browning's great series of dramatic poems in lyric form. It was first printed in the *Monthly Repository*, 1836, with "*Johannes Agricola in Meditation*"; was then included in the *Dramatic Lyrics* (1842); and is now classed among the *Dramatic Romances*.

Most of Browning's poems are simply dramatic monologues, without stage directions, often without even the name of the speaker. The reader must remember that it is not Browning who is speaking or telling the story; and must first notice *who is speaking*, and *under what circumstances*. Once this is done, most of the alleged "obscurity" of Browning will be found to have disappeared forever.

Withdrew the dripping cloak and shawl,  
And laid her soiled gloves by, untied  
Her hat and let the damp hair fall,

And, last, she sat down by my side  
And called me. When no voice replied,  
She put my arm about her waist,  
And made her smooth white shoulder  
bare

And all her yellow hair displaced,  
And, stooping, made my cheek lie  
there,

And spread, o'er all, her yellow hair,  
Murmuring how she loved me — she

Too weak, for all her heart's endeavor,  
To set its struggling passion free

From pride, and vainer ties dissever,  
And give herself to me forever.

But passion sometimes would prevail,  
Nor could to-night's gay feast restrain

A sudden thought of one so pale

For love of her, and all in vain :

So, she was come through wind and  
rain.

Be sure I looked up at her eyes

Happy and proud; at last I knew

Porphyria worshipped me; surprise

Made my heart swell, and still it  
grew

While I debated what to do.

That moment she was mine, mine, fair,

Perfectly pure and good : I found

A thing to do, and all her hair

In one long yellow string I wound

Three times her little throat around,

And strangled her. No pain felt she;

I am quite sure she felt no pain.

As a shut bud that holds a bee,

I warily oped her lids; again

Laughed the blue eyes without a stain.

And I untightened next the tress

About her neck; her cheek once more

Blushed bright beneath my burning  
kiss :

I propped her head up as before,

Only, this time my shoulder bore

Her head, which droops upon it still :

The smiling rosy little head,

So glad it has its utmost will,

That all it scorned at once is fled,

And I, its love, am gained instead !

Porphyria's love : she guessed not how

Her darling one wish would be heard,

And thus we sit together now,

And all night long we have not stirred,

And yet God has not said a word !

1836.

## PIPPA PASSES

## A DRAMA

## PERSONS

PIPPA	SCHRAMM
OTTIMA	JULES
SEBALD	PHENE
Foreign Students	Austrian Police
GOTTLIEB	BLUPHOCKS
LUIGI and his mother	
Poor Girls	
MONSIGNOR and his attendants	

## INTRODUCTION

NEW YEAR'S DAY AT ASOLO IN THE TRE-  
VISAN

*A large mean airy chamber. A girl,  
PIPPA, from the Silk-mills, springing out  
of bed.*

DAY!

Faster and more fast,  
O'er night's brim, day boils at last:  
Boils, pure gold, o'er the cloud-cup's brim  
Where spurting and suppressed it lay,  
For not a froth-flake touched the rim  
Of yonder gap in the solid gray  
Of the eastern cloud, an hour away;  
But forth one wavelet, then another,  
    curled,  
Till the whole sunrise, not to be suppressed,  
Rose, reddened, and its seething breast  
Flickered in bounds, grew gold, then over-  
    flowed the world.

Oh Day, if I squandered a wavelet of thee,  
A mite of my twelve-hours' treasure,  
The least of thy gazes or glances,  
(Be they grants thou art bound to or gifts  
    above measure)  
One of thy choices or one of thy chances,  
(Be they tasks God imposed thee or freaks  
    at thy pleasure)  
— My Day, if I squander such labor or  
    leisure,  
Then shame fall on Asolo, mischief on me!

Thy long blue solemn hours serenely  
    flowing,  
Whence earth, we feel, gets steady help  
    and good —  
Thy fitful sunshine-minutes, coming, go-  
    ing,  
As if earth turned from work in game-  
    some mood —

All shall be mine! But thou must treat  
    me not

As prosperous ones are treated, those who  
    live

At hand here, and enjoy the higher lot,  
In readiness to take what thou wilt give,  
And free to let alone what thou refusest;  
For, Day, my holiday, if thou ill-usest  
Me, who am only Pippa,— old-year's sor-  
    row,

Cast off last night, will come again to-  
    morrow:

Whereas, if thou prove gentle, I shall  
    borrow

Sufficient strength of thee for new-year's  
    sorrow.

All other men and women that this earth  
Belongs to, who all days alike possess,  
Make general plenty cure particular  
    dearth,

Get more joy one way, if another, less:  
Thou art my single day, God lends to  
    leaven

What were all earth else, with a feel of  
    heaven,—

Sole light that helps me through the year,  
    thy sun's!

Try now! Take Asolo's Four Happiest  
    Ones —

And let thy morning rain on that superb  
Great haughty Ottima; can rain disturb  
Her Sebald's homage? All the while thy  
    rain

Beats fiercest on her shrub-house window  
    pane

He will but press the closer, breathe more  
    warm

Against her cheek; how should she mind  
    the storm?

And, morning past, if mid-day shed a  
    gloom

O'er Jules and Phene,— what care bride  
    and groom

Save for their dear selves? 'Tis their  
    marriage day;

And while they leave church and go home  
    their way,

Hand clasping hand, within each breast  
    would be

Sunbeams and pleasant weather spite of  
    thee.

Then, for another trial, obscure thy eye  
With mist, — will Luigi and his mother  
grieve —

The lady and her child, unmatched, for-  
sooth,

She in her age, as Luigi in his youth,  
For true content? The cheerful town,  
warm, close

And safe, the sooner that thou art morose,  
Receives them. And yet once again, out-  
break

In storm at night on Monsignor, they make  
Such stir about, — whom they expect  
from Rome

To visit Asolo, his brothers' home,  
And say here masses proper to release  
A soul from pain, — what storm dares hurt  
his peace?

Calm would he pray, with his own  
thoughts to ward

Thy thunder off, nor want the angels'  
guard.

But Pippa — just one such mischance  
would spoil

Her day that lightens the next twelve-  
months' toil

At wearisome silk-winding, coil on coil!

And here I let time slip for naught!

Aha, you foolhardy sunbeam, caught

With a single splash from my ewer!

You that would mock the best pursuer,

Was my basin over-deep?

One splash of water ruins you asleep,

And up, up, fleet your brilliant bits

Wheeling and counterwheeling,

Reeling, broken beyond healing:

Now grow together on the ceiling!

That will task your wits.

Whoever it was quenched fire first, hoped

to see

Morsel after morsel flee

As merrily, as giddily . . .

Meantime, what lights my sunbeam on,  
Where settles by degrees the radiant  
cripple?

Oh, is it surely blown, my martagon?

New-blown and ruddy as St. Agnes'  
nipple,

Plump as the flesh-bunch on some Turk  
bird's poll!

Be sure if corals, branching 'neath the  
ripple

Of ocean, bud there, — fairies watch un-  
roll

Such turban-flowers; I say, such lamps  
disperse

Thick red flame through that dusk green  
universe!

I am queen of the thee, floweret!

And each fleshy blossom

Preserve I not — (safer

Than leaves that embower it,

Or shells that embosom)

— From weevil and chafer?

Laugh through my pane then; solicit the  
bee;

Gibe him, be sure; and, in midst of thy  
glee,

Love thy queen, worship me!

— Worship whom else? For am I not,  
this day,

Whate'er I please? What shall I please  
to-day?

My morn, noon, eve and night — how  
spend my day?

To-morrow I must be Pippa who winds  
silk,

The whole year round, to earn just bread  
and milk:

But, this one day, I have leave to go,  
And play out my fancy's fullest games;

I may fancy all day — and it shall be so —  
That I taste of the pleasures, am called by

the names

Of the Happiest Four in our Asolo!

See! Up the hillside yonder, through the  
morning,

Some one shall love me, as the world calls  
love:

I am no less than Ottima, take warning!

The gardens, and the great stone house  
above,

And other house for shrubs, all glass in  
front,

Are mine: where Sebald steals, as he is  
wont,

To court me, while old Luca yet reposes:  
And therefore, till the shrub-house door

uncloses,

I . . . what now? — give abundant  
cause for prate

About me — Ottima, I mean — of late.  
Too bold, too confident she'll still face

down

The spitefullest of talkers in our town.  
How we talk in the little town below!

But love, love, love — there's better  
love, I know!

This foolish love was only day's first  
offer;

I choose my next love to defy the scoffer;  
For do not our Bride and Bridegroom  
sally

Out of Possagno church at noon?  
Their house looks over Orcana valley:  
Why should not I be the bride as soon  
As Ottima? For I saw, beside,  
Arrive last night that little bride—  
Saw, if you call it seeing her, one flash  
Of the pale snow-pure cheek and black  
bright tresses,  
Blacker than all except the black eyelash;  
I wonder she contrives those lids no  
dresses!

— So strict was she, the veil  
Should cover close her pale  
Pure cheeks—a bride to look at and  
scarce touch,  
Scarce touch, remember, Jules! For are  
not such  
Used to be tended, flower-like, every  
feature,  
As if one's breath would fray the lily of a  
creature?

A soft and easy life these ladies lead:  
Whiteness in us were wonderful indeed.  
Oh, save that brow its virgin dimness,  
Keep that foot its lady primness,  
Let those ankles never swerve  
From their exquisite reserve,  
Yet have to trip along the streets like me,  
All but naked to the knee!  
How will she ever grant her Jules a bliss  
So startling as her real first infant kiss?  
Oh, no — not envy, this!

— Not envy, sure! — for if you gave me  
Leave to take or to refuse,  
In earnest, do you think I'd choose  
That sort of new love to enslave me?  
Mine should have lapped me round from  
the beginning;

As little fear of losing it as winning:  
Lovers grow cold, men learn to hate their  
wives,

And only parents' love can last our lives.  
At eve the Son and Mother, gentle pair,  
Commune inside our turret: what pre-  
vents

My being Luigi? While that mossy lair  
Of lizards through the winter-time is  
stirred

With each to each imparting sweet intents  
For this new-year, as brooding bird to  
bird —

(For I observe of late, the evening walk

Of Luigi and his mother, always ends  
Inside our ruined turret, where they talk,  
Calmer than lovers, yet more kind than  
friends)

— Let me be cared about, kept out of  
harm,

And schemed for, safe in love as with a  
charm;

Let me be Luigi! If I only knew  
What was my mother's face — my father,  
too!

Nay, if you come to that, best love of all  
Is God's; then why not have God's love  
befall

Myself as, in the palace by the Dome,  
Monsignor? — who to-night will bless the  
home

Of his dead brother; and God bless in  
turn

That heart which beats, those eyes which  
mildly burn

With love for all men! I, to-night at  
least,

Would be that holy and beloved priest.

Now wait! — even I already seem to  
share

In God's love: what does New-year's  
hymn declare?

What other meaning do these verses bear?

*All service ranks the same with God:*

*If now, as formerly he trod*

*Paradise, his presence fills*

*Our earth, each only as God wills*

*Can work — God's puppets, best and  
worst,*

*Are we; there is no last nor first.*

*Say not "a small event!" Why "small?"*

*Costs it more pain that this, ye call*

*A "great event," should come to pass,*

*Than that? Untwine me from the mass*

*Of deeds which make up life, one deed*

*Power shall fall short in or exceed!*

And more of it, and more of it! — oh  
yes —

I will pass each, and see their happiness,  
And envy none — being just as great, no  
doubt,

Useful to men, and dear to God as they!

A pretty thing to care about

So mightily, this single holiday!

But let the sun shine! Wherefore repine?

— With thee to lead me, O Day of mine,



Down the grass path gray with dew,  
Under the pine-wood, blind with boughs,  
Where the swallow never flew  
Nor yet cicala dared carouse —  
No, dared carouse!

*[She enters the street.]*

### I. MORNING

*Up the Hillside, inside the Shrub-house.*  
LUCA'S WIFE, OTTIMA, and her Para-  
mour, the German SEBALD.

*Sebald. [sings] Let the watching lids  
wink!*

*Day's ablaze with eyes, think!  
Deep into the night, drink!*

*Ottima.* Night? Such may be your  
Rhineland nights, perhaps;  
But this blood-red beam through the  
shutter's chink  
— We call such light, the morning: let  
us see!

Mind how you grope your way, though!  
How these tall

Naked geraniums straggle! Push the  
lattice

Behind that frame! — Nay, do I bid you?  
— Sebald,

It shakes the dust down on me! Why,  
of course

The slide-bolt catches. Well, are you  
content,

Or must I find you something else to  
spoil?

Kiss and be friends, my Sebald! Is't full  
morning?

Oh, don't speak then!

*Seb.* Ay, thus it used to be!  
Ever your house was, I remember, shut

Till mid-day; I observed that, as I  
strolled

On mornings through the vale here;  
country girls

Were noisy, washing garments in the  
brook,

Hinds drove the slow white oxen up the  
hills:

But no, your house was mute, would ope  
no eye!

And wisely: you were plotting one thing  
there,

Nature, another outside. I looked up —  
Rough white wood shutters, rusty iron

bars,  
Silent as death, blind in a flood of light.

Oh, I remember! — and the peasants  
laughed

And said, "The old man sleeps with the  
young wife."

This house was his, this chair, this win-  
dow — his.

*Otti.* Ah, the clear morning! I can  
see Saint Mark's;

That black streak is the belfry. Stop:  
Vicenza

Should lie . . . there's Padua, plain  
enough that blue!

Look o'er my shoulder, follow my finger!  
*Seb.* Morning?

It seems to me a night with a sun added.  
Where's dew, where's freshness? That

bruised plant, I bruised  
In getting through the lattice yestereve,

Droops as it did. See, here's my elbow's  
mark

I' the dust o' the sill.

*Otti.* Oh, shut the lattice, pray!

*Seb.* Let me lean out. I cannot scent  
blood here,

Foul as the morn may be.

There, shut the world out!  
How do you feel now, Ottima? There,

curse  
The world and all outside! Let us throw  
off

This mask: how do you bear yourself?  
Let's out

With all of it!

*Otti.* Best never speak of it.

*Seb.* Best speak again and yet again  
of it,

Till words cease to be more than words.  
"His blood,"

For instance — let those two words mean,  
"His blood"

And nothing more. Notice, I'll say  
them now, "His blood."

*Otti.* Assuredly if I repented  
The deed —

*Seb.* Repent? Who should repent,  
or why?

What puts that in your head? Did I  
once say

That I repented?

*Otti.* No; I said the deed . . .

*Seb.* "The deed" and "the event" —  
just now it was

"Our passion's fruit" — the devil take  
such cant!

Say, once and always, Luca was a wittol,  
I am his cut-throat, you are . . .

*Otti.* \* Here's the wine;  
I brought it when we left the house above,  
And glasses too — wine of both sorts.  
Black? White then?

*Seb.* But am not I his cut-throat?  
What are you?

*Otti.* There trudges on his business  
from the Duomo

Benet the Capuchin, with his brown hood  
And bare feet; always in one place at  
church,

Close under the stone wall by the south  
entry.

I used to take him for a brown cold piece  
Of the wall's self, as out of it he rose  
To let me pass — at first, I say, I used:  
Now, so has that dumb figure fastened on  
me,

I rather should account the plastered wall  
A piece of him, so chilly does it strike.  
This, Sebald?

*Seb.* No, the white wine — the  
white wine!

Well, Ottima, I promised no new year  
Should rise on us the ancient shameful  
way;

Nor does it rise. Pour on! To your  
black eyes!

Do you remember last damned New  
Year's day?

*Otti.* You brought those foreign prints.

We looked at them

Over the wine and fruit. I had to  
scheme

To get him from the fire. Nothing but  
saying

His own set wants the proof-mark, roused  
him up

To hunt them out.

*Seb.* 'Faith, he is not alive

To fondle you before my face.

*Otti.* Do you

Fondle me then! Who means to take  
your life

For that, my Sebald?

*Seb.* Hark you, Ottima!

One thing to guard against. We'll not  
make much

One of the other — that is, not make  
more

Parade of warmth, childish officious coil,  
Than yesterday: as if, sweet, I supposed  
Proof upon proof were needed now, now  
first,

To show I love you — yes, still love  
you — love you

In spite of Luca and what's come to him  
— Sure sign we had him ever in our  
thoughts,

White sneering old reproachful face and  
all!

We'll even quarrel, love, at times, as if  
We still could lose each other, were not  
tied

By this: conceive you?

*Otti.* Love!

*Seb.* Not tied so sure!

Because though I was wrought upon,  
have struck

His insolence back into him — am I  
So surely yours? — therefore forever  
yours?

*Otti.* Love, to be wise, (one counsel  
pays another.)

Should we have — months ago, when first  
we loved,

For instance that May morning we two  
stole

Under the green ascent of sycamores —  
If we had come upon a thing like that

Suddenly . . .

*Seb.* "A thing" — there again  
— "a thing!"

*Otti.* Then, Venus' body, had we come  
upon

My husband Luca Gaddi's murdered  
corpse

Within there, at his couch-foot, covered  
close —

Would you have pored upon it? Why  
persist

In poring now upon it? For 'tis here  
As much as there in the deserted house:  
You cannot rid your eyes of it. For me,  
Now he is dead I hate him worse: I  
hate . . .

Dare you stay here? I would go back  
and hold

His two dead hands, and say "I hate you  
worse,

Luca, than . . ."

*Seb.* Off, off — take your  
hands off mine,

'Tis the hot evening — off! oh, morning  
is it?

*Otti.* There's one thing must be done;  
you know what thing.

Come in and help to carry. We may sleep  
Anywhere in the whole wide house to-  
night.

*Seb.* What would come, think you, if  
we let him lie

Just as he is? Let him lie there until  
The angels take him! He is turned by  
this

Off from his face beside, as you will see.

*Otti.* This dusty pane might serve for  
looking-glass.

Three, four — four gray hairs! Is it so  
you said

A plait of hair should wave across my  
neck?

No — this way.

*Seb.* Ottima, I would give your neck,  
Each splendid shoulder, both those  
breasts of yours,

That this were undone! Killing! Kill  
the world,

So Luca lives again! — ay, \ lives to  
sputter

His fulsome dotage on you — yes, and  
feign

Surprise that I return at eve to sup,  
When all the morning I was loitering  
here —

Bid me dispatch my business and begone.  
I would . . .

*Otti.* See!

*Seb.* No, I'll finish. Do  
you think

I fear to speak the bare truth once for all?  
All we have talked of, is, at bottom, fine

To suffer; there's a recompense in guilt;  
One must be venturous and fortunate:

What is one young for, else? In age  
we'll sigh

O'er the wild reckless wicked days flown  
over;

Still, we have lived: the vice was in its  
place.

But to have eaten Luca's bread, have worn  
His clothes, have felt his money swell my  
purse —

Do lovers in romances sin that way?

Why, I was starving when I used to call  
And teach you music, starving while you  
plucked me

These flowers to smell!

*Otti.* My poor lost friend!

*Seb.* He gave me

Life, nothing less: what if he did re-  
proach

My perfidy, and threaten, and do more —  
Had he no right? What was to wonder  
at?

He sat by us at table quietly:

Why would you lean across till our cheeks  
touched?

Could he do less than make pretence to  
strike?

'Tis not the crime's sake — I'd commit  
ten crimes

Greater, to have this crime wiped out,  
undone!

And you — O how feel you? Feel you  
for me!

*Otti.* Well then, I love you better now  
than ever,

And best (look at me while I speak to  
you) —

Best for the crime; nor do I grieve, in  
truth,

This mask, this simulated ignorance,  
This affectation of simplicity,

Falls off our crime; this naked crime of  
ours

May not now be looked over: look it down!  
Great? let it be great; but the joys it

brought,  
Pay they or no its price? Come; they or it!

Speak not! The past, would you give up  
the past

Such as it is, pleasure and crime together?  
Give up that noon I owned my love for  
you?

The garden's silence: even the single bee  
Persisting in his toil, suddenly stopped,

And where he hid you only could surmise  
By some campanula chalice set a-swing.

Who stammered — "Yes, I love you?"

*Seb.* And I drew  
Back; put far back your face with both

my hands  
Lest you should grow too full of me —

your face  
So seemed athirst for my whole soul and

body!

*Otti.* And when I ventured to receive  
you here,

Made you steal hither in the mornings —  
*Seb.* When

I used to look up 'neath the shrub-house  
here,

Till the red fire on its glazed windows  
spread

To a yellow haze?  
*Otti.* Ah — my sign was, the sun

Inflamed the sere side of yon chestnut-  
tree

Nipped by the first frost.  
*Seb.* You would always laugh

At my wet boots: I had to stride through  
grass  
Over my ankles.

Otti. Then our crowning night !

Seb. The July night ?

Otti. The day of it too, Sebald !  
When heaven's pillars seemed o'erbowed  
with heat,  
Its black-blue canopy suffered descend  
Close on us both, to weigh down each to  
each,  
And smother up all life except our life,  
So lay we till the storm came.

Seb. How it came !

Otti. Buried in the woods we lay, you  
recollect ;  
Swift ran the searching tempest over-  
head ;

And ever and anon some bright white  
shaft

Burned through the pine-tree roof, here  
burned and there,

As if God's messenger through the close  
wood screen

Plunged and replunged his weapon at a  
venture,

Feeling for guilty thee and me : then  
broke

The thunder like a whole sea overhead —

Seb. Yes !

Otti. — While I stretched myself  
upon you, hands

To hands, my mouth to your hot mouth,  
and shook

All my locks loose, and covered you with  
them —

You, Sebald, the same you !

Seb. Slower, Ottima !

Otti. And as we lay —

Seb. Less vehemently ! Love me !  
Forgive me ! Take not words, mere  
words, to heart !

Your breath is worse than wine. Breathe  
slow, speak slow !

Do not lean on me !

Otti. Sebald, as we lay,  
Rising and falling only with our pants,  
Who said, "Let death come now ! " 'Tis  
right to die !

Right to be punished ! Naught com-  
pletes such bliss

But woe ! " Who said that ?

Seb. How did we ever rise ?  
Wasn't that we slept ? Why did it end ?

Otti. I felt you  
Taper into a point the ruffled ends

Of my loose locks 'twixt both your humid  
lips,

My hair is fallen now : knot it again !

Seb. I kiss you now, dear Ottima,  
now and now !

This way ? Will you forgive me — be  
once more

My great queen ?

Otti. Bind it thrice about my brow ;  
Crown me your queen, your spirit's  
arbitress,

Magnificent in sin. Say that !

Seb. I crown you  
My great white queen, my spirit's arbi-  
tress,

Magnificent . . .

[From without is heard the voice of PIPPA  
singing —

*The year's at the spring  
And day's at the morn ;  
Morning's at seven ;  
The hillside's dew-pearled ;  
The lark's on the wing ;  
The snail's on the thorn :  
God's in his heaven —  
All's right with the world !*

[PIPPA passes.

Seb. God's in his heaven ! Do you  
hear that ? Who spoke ?

You, you spoke !

Otti. Oh — that little ragged girl !  
She must have rested on the step : we  
give them

But this one holiday the whole year round.  
Did you ever see our silk-mills — their  
inside ?

There are ten silk-mills now belong to  
you.

She stoops to pick my double hearts-  
ease . . . Sh !

She does not hear : call you out louder !

Seb. Leave me !

Go, get your clothes on — dress those  
shoulders !

Otti. Sebald ?

Seb. Wipe off that paint ! I hate you.

Otti. Miserable !

Seb. My God, and she is emptied of it  
now !

Outright now ! — how miraculously gone  
All of the grace — had she not strange  
grace once ?

Why, the blank cheek hangs listless as it  
likes,

No purpose holds the features up to-  
gether,

Only the cloven brow and puckered chin

Stay in their places: and the very hair,  
That seemed to have a sort of life in it,  
Drops, a dead web!

*Otti.* Speak to me — not of me!

*Seb.* — That round great full-orbed  
face, where not an angle

Broke the delicious indolence — all  
broken!

*Otti.* To me — not of me! Ungrate-  
ful, perjured cheat!

A coward too: but ingrate's worse than  
all!

Beggar — my slave — a fawning, cringing  
lie!

Leave me! Betray me! I can see your  
drift!

A lie that walks and eats and drinks!

*Seb.* My God!

Those morbid olive faultless shoulder-  
blades —

I should have known there was no blood  
beneath!

*Otti.* You hate me then? You hate  
me then?

*Seb.* To think

She would succeed in her absurd attempt,  
And fascinate by sinning, show herself

Superior — guilt from its excess superior  
To innocence! That little peasant's voice

Has righted all again. Though I be lost,  
I know which is the better, never fear,

Of vice or virtue, purity or lust,  
Nature or trick! I see what I have done,

Entirely now! Oh I am proud to feel  
Such torments — let the world take credit

thence —

I, having done my deed, pay too its price!  
I hate, hate — curse you! God's in his

heaven!

*Otti.* — Me!

Me! no, no, Sebald, not yourself — kill  
me!

Mine is the whole crime. Do you kill  
me — then

Yourself — then — presently — first hear  
me speak!

I always meant to kill myself — wait,  
you!

Lean on my breast — not as a breast;  
don't love me

The more because you lean on me, my  
own

Heart's Sebald! There, there, both  
deaths presently!

*Seb.* My brain is drowned now —  
quite drowned: all I feel

Is . . . is, at swift-recurring intervals,  
A hurry-down within me, as of waters  
Loosened to smother up some ghastly pit:  
There they go — whirls from a black fiery  
sea!

*Otti.* Not me — to him, O God, be  
merciful!

*Talk by the way, while PIPPA is passing  
from the hillside to Orcana. Foreign  
Students of painting and sculpture, from  
Venice, assembled opposite the house of  
JULES, a young French statuery, at  
Passagno.*

*1st Student.* Attention! My own post is  
beneath this window, but the pomegranate  
clump yonder will hide three or four of you  
with a little squeezing, and Schramm and  
his pipe must lie flat in the balcony. Four,  
five — who's a defaulter? We want  
everybody, for Jules must not be suffered  
to hurt his bride when the jest's found out.

*2d Stud.* All here! Only our poet's  
away — never having much meant to be  
present, moon strike him! The airs of that  
fellow, that Giovacchino! He was in vio-  
lent love with himself, and had a fair pros-  
pect of thriving in his suit, so unmolested  
was it, — when suddenly a woman falls in  
love with him, too; and out of pure jeal-  
ousy he takes himself off to Trieste, im-  
mortal poem and all: whereto is this  
prophetic epitaph appended already, as  
Bluphocks assures me, — "*Here a mam-  
moth-poem lies, Fouled to death by but-  
terflies.*" His own fault, the simpleton!  
Instead of cramp couplets, each like a  
knife in your entrails, he should write,  
says Bluphocks, both classically and in-  
tellegibly. — *Æsculapius, an Epic. Cata-  
logue of the drugs: Hebe's Plaister — One  
strip Cools your lip. Phæbus' emulsion —  
One bottle Clears your throttle. Mercury's  
bolus — One box Cures . . .*

*3d Stud.* Subside, my fine fellow! If  
the marriage was over by ten o'clock,  
Jules will certainly be here in a minute  
with his bride.

*2d Stud.* Good! — only, so should the  
poet's muse have been universally accept-  
able, says Bluphocks, *et canibus nostris*  
. . . and Delia not better known to our  
literary dogs than the boy Giovacchino!

*1st Stud.* To the point, now. Where's  
Gottlieb, the new-comer? Oh, — listen,  
Gottlieb, to what has called down this



piece of friendly vengeance on Jules, of which we now assemble to witness the winding-up. We are all agreed, all in a tale, observe, when Jules shall burst out on us in a fury by and by; I am spokesman—the verses that are to undeceive Jules bear my name of Lutwyche—but each professes himself alike insulted by this strutting stone-squarer, who came along from Paris to Munich, and thence with a crowd of us to Venice and Possagno here, but proceeds in a day or two alone again—oh, alone indubitably! to Rome and Florence. He, forsooth, took up his portion with these dissolute, brutalized, heartless bunglers!—so he was heard to call us all. Now, is Schramm brutalized, I should like to know? Am I heartless?

*Gottlieb.* Why, somewhat heartless; for, suppose Jules a coxcomb as much as you choose, still, for this mere coxcombry, you will have brushed off—what do folks style it?—the bloom of his life. It is too late to alter? These love-letters, now, you call his—I can't laugh at them.

*4th Stud.* Because you never read the sham letters of our inditing which drew forth these.

*Gott.* His discovery of the truth will be frightful.

*4th Stud.* That's the joke. But you should have joined us at the beginning: there's no doubt he loves the girl—loves a model he might hire by the hour!

*Gott.* See here! "He has been accustomed," he writes, "to have Canova's women about him, in stone, and the world's women beside him, in flesh; these being as much below, as those above, his soul's aspiration: but now he is to have the reality." There you laugh again! I say, you wipe off the very dew of his youth.

*1st Stud.* Schramm! (Take the pipe out of his mouth, somebody!) Will Jules lose the bloom of his youth?

*Schramm.* Nothing worth keeping is ever lost in this world: look at a blossom—it drops presently, having done its service and lasted its time; but fruits succeed, and where would be the blossom's place could it continue? As well affirm that your eye is no longer in your body, because its earliest favorite, whatever it may have first loved to look on, is dead and done with—as that any affection is lost to the

soul when its first object, whatever happened first to satisfy it, is superseded in due course. Keep but ever looking, whether with the body's eye or the mind's, and you will soon find something to look on! Has a man done wondering at women?—there follow men, dead and alive, to wonder at. Has he done wondering at men?—there's God to wonder at: and the faculty of wonder may be, at the same time, old and tired enough with respect to its first object, and yet young and fresh sufficiently, so far as concerns its novel one. Thus . . .

*1st Stud.* Put Schramm's pipe into his mouth again! There, you see! Well, this Jules . . . a wretched fribble—oh, I watched his disportings at Possagno, the other day! Canova's gallery—you know: There he marches first resolutely past great works by the dozen without vouchsafing an eye: all at once he stops full at the *Psiche-fanciulla*—cannot pass that old acquaintance without a nod of encouragement—"In your new place, beauty? Then behave yourself as well here as at Munich—I see you!" Next he posts himself deliberately before the unfinished *Pietà* for half an hour without moving, till up he starts of a sudden, and thrusts his very nose into—I say, into—the group; by which gesture you are informed that precisely the sole point he had not fully mastered in Canova's practice was a certain method of using the drill in the articulation of the knee-joint—and that, likewise, has he mastered at length! Good-by, therefore, to poor Canova—whose gallery no longer needs detain his successor Jules, the predestined novel thinker in marble!

*5th Stud.* Tell him about the women: go on to the women!

*1st Stud.* Why, on that matter he could never be supercilious enough. How should we be other (he said) than the poor devils, you see, with those debasing habits we cherish! He was not to wallow in that mire, at least; he would wait, and love only at the proper time, and meanwhile put up with the *Psiche-fanciulla*. Now, I happened to hear of a young Greek—real Greek girl at Malamocco: a true Islander, do you see, with Alciphron's "hair like seamount"—Schramm knows!—white and quiet as an apparition, and

fourteen years old at farthest, — a daughter of Natalia, so she swears — that hag Natalia, who helps us to models at three *live* an hour. We selected this girl for the heroine of our jest. So, first, Jules received a scented letter — somebody had seen his Tydeus at the Academy, and my picture was nothing to it: a profound admirer bade him persevere — would make herself known to him ere long. (Paolina, my little friend of the *Fenice*, transcribes divinely.) And in due time, the mysterious correspondent gave certain hints of her peculiar charms — the pale cheeks, the black hair — whatever, in short, had struck us in our Malamocco model; we retained her name, too — Phene, which is, by interpretation, sea-eagle. Now, think of Jules finding himself distinguished from the herd of us by such a creature! In his very first answer he proposed marrying his mistress: and fancy us over these letters, two, three times a day, to receive and dispatch! I concocted the main of it: relations were in the way — secrecy must be observed — in fine, would he wed her on trust, and only speak to her when they were indissolubly united? St — st — Here they come!

*6th Stud.* Both of them! Heaven's love, speak softly, speak within yourselves!

*5th Stud.* Look at the bridegroom! Half his hair in storm and half in calm, — patted down over the left temple, — like a frothy cup one blows on to cool it: and the same old blouse that he murders the marble in.

*2d Stud.* Not a rich vest like yours, Hannibal Scratchy! — rich, that your face may the better set it off.

*6th Stud.* And the bride! Yes, sure enough, our Phene! Should you have known her in her clothes? How magnificently pale.

*Gott.* She does not also take it for earnest, I hope?

*1st Stud.* Oh, Natalia's concern, that is. We settle with Natalia.

*6th Stud.* She does not speak — has evidently let out no word. The only thing is, will she equally remember the rest of her lesson, and repeat correctly all those verses which are to break the secret to Jules?

*Gott.* How he gazes on her! Pity — pity!

*1st Stud.* They go in; now, silence! You three, — not nearer the window, mind, than that pomegranate; just where the little girl, who a few minutes ago passed us singing, is seated.

## II. NOON

*Over Orcana.* The house of JULES, who crosses its threshold with PHENE: she is silent, on which JULES begins —

Do not die, Phene! I am yours now, you Are mine now; let fate reach me how she likes,

If you'll not die: so, never die! Sit here —

My work-room's single seat. I overlean This length of hair and lustrous front; they turn

Like an entire flower upward: eyes, lips, last

Your chin — no, last your throat turns: 'tis their scent

Pulls down my face upon you. Nay, look ever

This one way till I change, grow you — I could

Change into you, beloved!

You by me,

And I by you; this is your hand in mine, And side by side we sit: all's true, Thank God!

I have spoken: speak you!

O my life to come!

My Tydeus must be carved that's there in clay;

Yet how be carved, with you about the room?

Where must I place you? When I think that once

This room-full of rough block-work seemed my heaven

Without you! Shall I ever work again, Get fairly into my old ways again,

Bid each conception stand while, trait by trait,

My hand transfers its lineaments to stone?

Will my mere fancies live near you, their truth —

The live truth, passing and repassing me. Sitting beside me?

Now speak!

Only first,  
See, all your letters! Was't not well  
contrived?  
Their hiding-place in Psyche's robe; she  
keeps  
Your letters next her skin: which drops  
out foremost?  
Ah,—this that swam down like a first  
moonbeam  
Into my world!

Again those eyes complete  
Their melancholy survey, sweet and slow,  
Of all my room holds; to return and rest  
On me, with pity, yet some wonder too:  
As if God bade some spirit plague a world,  
And this were the one moment of surprise  
And sorrow while she took her station,  
pausing

O'er what she sees, finds good, and must  
destroy!

What gaze you at? Those? Books, I  
told you of;

Let your first word to me rejoice them,  
too:

This minion, a Coluthus, writ in red,  
Bistre and azure by Bessarion's scribe —  
Read this line . . . no, shame — Homer's  
be the Greek

First breathed me from the lips of my  
Greek girl!

This Odyssey in coarse black vivid type  
With faded yellow blossoms 'twixt page  
and page,

To mark great places with due gratitude;  
*"He said, and on Antinous directed  
A bitter shaft"* . . . a flower blots out the  
rest!

Again upon your search? My statues,  
then!

— Ah, do not mind that — better that  
will look

When cast in bronze — an Almain Kai-  
ser, that,

Swart-green and gold, with truncheon  
based on hip.

This, rather, turn to! What, unrecog-  
nized?

I thought you would have seen that here  
you sit

As I imagined you, — Hippolyta,  
Naked upon her bright Numidian horse.  
Recall you this then? "Carve in bold  
relief" —

So you commanded — "Carve, against I  
come,

A Greek, in Athens, as our fashion was,

Feasting, bay-filled and thunder-free,  
Who rises 'neath the lifted myrtle-branch.  
'Praise those who slew Hipparchus!' cry  
the guests.

'While o'er thy head the singer's myrtle  
waves

As erst above our champion: stand up,  
all!"

See, I have labored to express your  
thought.

Quite round, a cluster of mere hands and  
arms

(Thrust in all senses, all ways, from all  
sides,

Only consenting at the branch's end  
They strain toward) serves for frame to a  
sole face,

The Praiser's, in the centre: who with  
eyes

Sightless, so bend they back to light in-  
side

His brain where visionary forms throng  
up,

Sings, minding not that palpitating arch  
Of hands and arms, nor the quick drip of  
wine

From the drenched leaves o'erhead, nor  
crowns cast off,

Violet and parsley crowns to trample on —  
Sings, pausing as the patron-ghosts ap-  
prove,

Devoutly their unconquerable hymn.  
But you must say a "well" to that — say  
"well!"

Because you gaze — am I fantastic,  
sweet?

Gaze like my very life's-stuff, marble —  
marbly

Even to the silence! Why, before I  
found

The real flesh Phene, I inured myself  
To see, throughout all nature, varied stuff  
For better nature's birth by means of art:  
With me, each substance tended to one  
form

Of beauty — to the human archetype.  
On every side occurred suggestive germs  
Of that — the tree, the flower — or take  
the fruit, —

Some rosy shape, continuing the peach,  
Curved beewise o'er its bough; as rosy  
limbs,

Depending, nestled in the leaves; and  
just

From a cleft rose-peach the whole Dryad  
sprang.

But of the stuffs one can be master of,  
 How I divined their capabilities!  
 From the soft-rinded smoothening facile  
 chalk  
 That yields your outline to the air's em-  
 brace,  
 Half-softened by a halo's pearly gloom;  
 Down to the crisp imperious steel, so sure  
 To cut its one confided thought clean out  
 Of all the world. But marble! — 'neath  
 my tools  
 More pliable than jelly — as it were  
 Some clear primordial creature dug from  
 depths  
 In the earth's heart, where itself breeds  
 itself,  
 And whence all baser substance may be  
 worked;  
 Refine it off to air, you may, — condense  
 it  
 Down to the diamond; — is not metal  
 there,  
 When o'er the sudden speck my chisel  
 trips?  
 — Not flesh, as flake off flake I scale, ap-  
 proach,  
 Lay bare those bluish veins of blood  
 asleep?  
 Lurks flame in no strange windings where,  
 surprised  
 By the swift implement sent home at  
 once,  
 Flushes and glowings radiate and hover  
 About its track?  
 Phene? what — why is this?  
 That whitening cheek, those still dilating  
 eyes!  
 Ah, you will die — I knew that you would  
 die!

*PHENE begins, on his having long remained  
 silent.*

*Phene.* Now the end's coming; to be  
 sure it must  
 Have ended sometime! Tush, why need  
 I speak  
 Their foolish speech? I cannot bring to  
 mind  
 One half of it, beside; and do not care  
 For old Natalia now, nor any of them.  
 Oh, you — what are you? — if I do not  
 try  
 To say the words Natalia made me learn,  
 To please your friends, — it is to keep my-  
 self  
 Where your voice lifted me, by letting that

Proceed: but can it? Even you, per-  
 haps,  
 Cannot take up, now you have once let  
 fall,  
 The music's life, and me along with that —  
 No, or you would; We'll stay, then, as  
 we are:  
 Above the world.

You creature with the eyes!  
 If I could look forever up to them,  
 As now you let me, — I believe, all sin,  
 All memory of wrong done, suffering  
 borne,  
 Would drop down, low and lower, to the  
 earth  
 Whence all that's low comes, and there  
 touch and stay  
 — Never to overtake the rest of me,  
 All that, unspotted, reaches up to you,  
 Drawn by those eyes! What rises is  
 myself,  
 Not me the shame and suffering; but  
 they sink,  
 Are left, I rise above them. Keep me so,  
 Above the world!

But you sink, for your eyes  
 Are altering — altered! Stay — "I love  
 you, love" . . .  
 I could prevent it if I understood:  
 More of your words to me: was't in the  
 tone  
 Or the words, your power?

Or stay — I will repeat  
 Their speech, if that contents you! Only  
 change  
 No more, and I shall find it presently  
 Far back here, in the brain yourself filled  
 up.

Natalia threatened me that harm should  
 follow

Unless I spoke their lesson to the end,  
 But harm to me, I thought she meant, not  
 you.

Your friends, — Natalia said they were  
 your friends

And meant you well, — because, I  
 doubted it,

Observing (what was very strange to see)  
 On every face, so different in all else,  
 The same smile girls like me are used to  
 bear,

But never men, men cannot stoop so low;  
 Yet your friends, speaking of you, used  
 that smile,

That hateful smirk of boundless self-  
 conceit



Which seems to take possession of the world  
 And make of God a tame confederate,  
 Purveyor to their appetites . . . you know!  
 But still Natalia said they were your friends,  
 And they assented though they smiled the more,  
 And all came round me, — that thin Englishman  
 With light lank hair seemed leader of the rest;  
 He held a paper — “What we want,” said he,  
 Ending some explanation to his friends —  
 “Is something slow, involved and mystical,  
 To hold Jules long in doubt, yet take his taste  
 And lure him on until, at innermost  
 Where he seeks sweetness’ soul, he may find — this!  
 — As in the apple’s core, the noisome fly:  
 For insects on the rind are seen at once,  
 And brushed aside as soon, but this is found  
 Only when on the lips or loathing tongue.”  
 And so he read what I have got by heart:  
 I’ll speak it, — “Do not die, love! I am yours” . . .  
 No — is not that, or like that, part of words  
 Yourself began by speaking? Strange to lose  
 What cost such pains to learn! Is this more right?

*I am a painter who cannot paint;  
 In my life, a devil rather than saint;  
 In my brain, as poor a creature too:  
 No end to all I cannot do!  
 Yet do one thing at least I can —  
 Love a man or hate a man  
 Supremely: thus my love began.  
 Through the Valley of Love I went,  
 In the loveliest spot to abide,  
 And just on the verge where I pitched my tent,  
 I found Hate dwelling beside.  
 (Let the Bridegroom ask what the painter meant,  
 Of his Bride, of the peerless Bride!)  
 And further, I traversed Hate’s grove,  
 In the hatefullest nook to dwell;  
 But lo, where I flung myself prone, couched  
 Love*

*Where the shadow threefold fell.  
 (The meaning — those black bride’s-eyes  
 above,  
 Not a painter’s lip should tell!)*

“And here,” said he, “Jules probably will ask  
 ‘You have black eyes, Love, — you are, sure enough,  
 My peerless bride, — then do you tell indeed  
 What needs some explanation! What means this?’”  
 — And I am to go on, without a word —

*So, I grew wise in Love and Hate,  
 From simple that I was of late.  
 Once, when I loved, I would enlase  
 Breast, eyelids, hands, feet, form and face  
 Of her I loved, in one embrace —  
 As if by mere love I could love immensely!  
 Once, when I hated I would plunge  
 My sword, and wipe with the first lunge  
 My foe’s whole life out like a sponge —  
 As if by mere hate I could hate intensely!  
 But now I am wiser, know better the fashion  
 How passion seeks aid from its opposite  
 passion:*

*And if I see cause to love more, hate more  
 Than ever man loved, ever hated before —  
 And seek in the Valley of Love  
 The nest, or the nook in Hate’s Grove,  
 Where my soul may surely reach  
 The essence, naught less, of each,  
 The Hate of all Hates, the Love  
 Of all Loves, in the Valley or Grove, —  
 I find them the very warders  
 Each of the other’s borders.  
 When I love most, Love is disguised  
 In Hate; and when Hate is surprised  
 In Love, then I hate most: ask  
 How Love smiles through Hate’s iron casque,  
 Hate grins through Love’s rose-braided  
 mask, —  
 And how, having hated thee,  
 I sought long and painfully  
 To reach thy heart, nor prick  
 The skin but pierce to the quick —  
 Ask this, my Jules, and be answered  
 straight  
 By thy bride — how the painter Lutwyche  
 can hate!*

JULES interposes.

Lutwyche! Who else? But all of them,  
 no doubt,



Hated me: they at Venice — presently  
Their turn, however! You I shall not  
meet:

If I dreamed, saying this would wake me.

Keep

What's here, the gold — we cannot meet  
again,

Consider, and the money was but meant  
For two years' travel, which is over now.  
All chance or hope or care or need of it,  
This — and what comes from selling  
these, my casts

And books and medals, except . . . let  
them go

Together, so the produce keeps you safe  
Out of Natalia's clutches! If by chance  
(For all's chance here) I should survive  
the gang

At Venice, root out all fifteen of them,  
We might meet somewhere, since the  
world is wide.

*From without is heard the voice of PIPPA,  
singing —*

*Give her but a least excuse to love me!*

*When — where —*

*How — can this arm establish her above  
me,*

*If fortune fixed her as my lady there,  
There already, to eternally reprove me?*

*("Hist!" — said Kate the Queen;*

*But "Oh!" cried the maiden, binding  
her tresses,*

*"'Tis only a page that carols unseen,  
Crumbling your hounds their messes!")*

*Is she wronged? — To the rescue of her  
honor,*

*My heart!*

*Is she poor? — What costs it to be styled  
a donor?*

*Merely an earth to cleave, a sea to part.*

*But that fortune should have thrust all  
this upon her!*

*("Nay, list!" — bade Kate the Queen;  
And still cried the maiden, binding her  
tresses,*

*"'Tis only a page that carols unseen,  
Fitting your hawks their jesses!")*

[PIPPA passes.

JULES resumes.

What name was that the little girl sang  
forth?

Kate? The Cornaro, doubtless, who re-  
nounced

The crown of Cyprus to be lady here  
At Asolo, where still her memory stays.  
And peasants sing how once a certain  
page

Pined for the grace of her so far above  
His power of doing good to, "Kate the  
Queen —

She never could be wronged, be poor,"  
he sighed,

"Need him to help her!"

Yes, a bitter thing

To see our lady above all need of us;

Yet so we look ere we will love; not I,

But the world looks so. If whoever loves

Must be, in some sort, god or worshipper,

The blessing or the blest one, queen or  
page,

Why should we always choose the page's  
part?

Here is a woman with utter need of me, —  
I find myself queen here, it seems!

How strange!

Look at the woman here with the new  
soul,

Like my own Psyche, — fresh upon her  
lips

Alit, the visionary butterfly,

Waiting my word to enter and make  
bright,

Or flutter off and leave all blank as first.

This body had no soul before, but slept  
Or stirred, was beauteous or ungainly,

free  
From taint or foul with stain, as outward  
things

Fastened their image on its passiveness:  
Now it will wake, feel, live — or die  
again!

Shall to produce form out of unshaped  
stuff

Be Art — and further, to evoke a soul  
From form be nothing? This new soul  
is mine!

Now, to kill Lutwyche, what would that  
do? — save

A wretched dauber, men will hoot to  
death

Without me, from their hooting. Oh,  
to hear

God's voice plain as I heard it first, before  
They broke in with their laughter! I  
heard them

Henceforth, not God.

To Ancona — Greece — some isle!

I wanted silence only; there is clay

Everywhere. One may do whate'er one likes

In Art: the only thing is, to make sure  
That one does like it — which takes pains  
to know.

Scatter all this, my Phene — this mad  
dream!

Who, what is Lutwyche, what Natalia's  
friends,

What the whole world except our love —  
my own,

Own Phene? But I told you, did I not,  
Ere night we travel for your land — some  
isle

With the sea's silence on it? Stand  
aside —

I do but break these paltry models up  
To begin Art afresh. Meet Lutwyche,  
I —

And save him from my statue meeting  
him?

Some unsuspected isle in the far seas!

Like a god going through his world,  
there stands

One mountain for a moment in the dusk,  
Whole brotherhoods of cedars on its  
brow:

And you are ever by me while I gaze

— Are in my arms as now — as now — as  
now!

Some unsuspected isle in the far seas!

Some unsuspected isle in far-off seas!

*Talk by the way, while PIPPA is passing  
from Orcana to the Turret. Two or three  
of the Austrian Police loitering with  
BLUPHOCKS, an English vagabond, just in  
view of the Turret.*

*Bluphocks.* So, that is your Pippa, the  
little girl who passed us singing? Well,  
your Bishop's Intendant's money shall be  
honestly earned: — now, don't make me  
that sour face because I bring the Bishop's  
name into the business; we know he can  
have nothing to do with such horrors: we  
know that he is a saint and all that a  
bishop should be, who is a great man  
beside. *Oh were but every worm a mag-  
got, Every fly a grig, Every bough a Christ-  
mas fagot, Every tune a jig!* In fact, I  
have abjured all religions; but the last I  
inclined to was the Armenian: for I have  
travelled, do you see, and at Koenigs-  
berg, Prussia Improper (so styled because  
there's a sort of bleak hungry sun there),  
you might remark, over a venerable

house-porch, a certain Chaldee inscrip-  
tion; and brief as it is, a mere glance  
at it used absolutely to change the mood  
of every bearded passenger. In they  
turned, one and all; the young and  
lightsome, with no irreverent pause, the  
aged and decrepit, with a sensible  
alacrity: 'twas the Grand Rabbi's abode,  
in short. Struck with curiosity, I lost no  
time in learning Syriac — (these are  
vowels, you dogs — follow my stick's end  
in the mud — *Celarent, Darii, Ferio!*)  
and one morning presented myself,  
spelling-book in hand, a, b, c, — I  
picked it out letter by letter, and what  
was the purport of this miraculous posy?  
Some cherished legend of the past, you'll  
say — "*How Moses hocus-focussed Egypt's  
land with fly and locust,*" — or "*How to  
Jonah sounded harshish, Get thee up and  
go to Tarshish,*" — or "*How the angel  
meeting Balaam, Straight his ass returned a  
salaam.*" In no wise! "*Shackabrack —  
Boach — somebody or other — Isaach, Re-  
cei-ver, Pur-cha-ser and Ex-chan-ger of —  
Stolen Goods!*" So talk to me of the re-  
ligion of a bishop! I have renounced all  
bishops save Bishop Beveridge! — mean  
to live so — and die — *As some Greek dog-  
sage dead and merry, Hellward bound in  
Charon's wherry, With food for both worlds,  
under and upper, Lupine-seed and Hecate's  
supper, And never an obolus. . .*  
(though thanks to you, or this Intendant  
— through you, or this Bishop through his  
Intendant — I possess a burning pocket-  
full of zwanzigers) . . . *To pay the Styg-  
ian Ferry!*

*1st Policeman.* There is the girl, then;  
go and deserve them the moment you  
have pointed out to us Signor Luigi and  
his mother. [*To the rest.*] I have been  
noticing a house yonder, this long while:  
not a shutter unclosed since morning!

*2d Pol.* Old Luca Gaddi's, that owns  
the silk-mills here: he dozes by the hour,  
wakes up, sighs deeply, says he should like  
to be Prince Metternich, and then dozes  
again, after having bidden young Sebald,  
the foreigner, set his wife to playing  
draughts. Never molest such a house-  
hold, they mean well.

*Blup.* Only, cannot you tell me some-  
thing of this little Pippa, I must have to  
do with? One could make something of  
that name. Pippa — that is, short for

Felippa — rhyming to *Panurge consults Hertrippa* — *Believest thou King Agrippa?* Something might be done with that name.

*2d Pol.* Put into rhyme that your head and a ripe muskmelon would not be dear at half a *zwanziger!* Leave this fooling, and look out; the afternoon's over or nearly so.

*3d Pol.* Where in this passport of Signor Luigi does our Principal instruct you to watch him so narrowly? There? What's there beside a simple signature? (That English fool's busy watching.)

*2d Pol.* Flourish all round — "Put all possible obstacles in his way;" oblong dot at the end — "Detain him till further advices reach you;" scratch at bottom — "Send him back on pretence of some informality in the above;" ink-spirt on right hand side (which is the case here) — "Arrest him at once," Why and wherefore, I don't concern myself, but my instructions amount to this: if Signor Luigi leaves home to-night for Vienna — well and good, the passport deposed with us for our *visa* is really for his own use, they have misinformed the Office, and he means well; but let him stay over to-night — there has been the pretence we suspect, the accounts of his corresponding and holding intelligence with the Carbonari are correct, we arrest him at once, to-morrow comes Venice, and presently Spielberg. Bluphocks makes the signal, sure enough! That is he, entering the turret with his mother, no doubt.

### III. EVENING

*Inside the Turret on the Hill above Asolo.*  
*LUIGI and his MOTHER entering.*

*Mother.* If there blew wind, you'd hear a long sigh, easing  
 The utmost heaviness of music's heart.

*Luigi.* Here in the archway?

*Mother.* Oh no, no — in farther,  
 Where the echo is made, on the ridge.

*Luigi.* Here surely, then,  
 How plain the tap of my heel as I leaped  
 up!

Hark — "Lucius Junius!" The very  
 ghost of a voice

Whose body is caught and kept by . . .  
 what are those?

Mere withered wallflowers, waving over  
 head?

They seem an elvish group with thin  
 bleached hair

Then lean out of their topmost fortress —  
 look

And listen, mountain men, to what we say,  
 Hand under chin of each grave earthy  
 face.

Up and show faces all of you! — "All of  
 you!"

That's the king dwarf with the scarlet  
 comb; old Franz,

Come down and meet your fate? Hark  
 — "Meet your fate!"

*Mother.* Let him not meet it, my  
 Luigi — do not

Go to his City! Putting crime aside,  
 Half of these ills of Italy are feigned:  
 Your Pellicos and writers for effect,  
 Write for effect.

*Luigi.* Hush! Say A writes, and B.

*Mother.* These A's and B's write for  
 effect, I say.

Then, evil is in its nature loud, while good  
 Is silent; you hear each petty injury,  
 None of his virtues; he is old beside,  
 Quiet and kind, and densely stupid.

Why

Do A and B kill not him themselves?

*Luigi.* They teach  
 Others to kill him — me — and, if I fail,  
 Others to succeed; now, if A tried and  
 failed,

I could not teach that: mine's the lesser  
 task.

*Mother.* They visit night by night . . .

*Mother.* — You, Luigi?  
 Ah, will you let me tell you what you are?

*Luigi.* Why not? Oh, the one thing  
 you fear to hint,

You may assure yourself I say and say  
 Ever to myself! At times — nay, even  
 as now

We sit — I think my mind is touch'd,  
 suspect

All is not sound: but is not knowing that,  
 What constitutes one sane or otherwise?  
 I know I am thus — so, all is right again.  
 I laugh at myself as through the town I  
 walk,

And see men merry as if no Italy  
 Were suffering; then I ponder — "I am  
 rich,

Young, healthy; why should this fact  
 trouble me,

More than it troubles these?" But it  
 does trouble.

No, trouble's a bad word: for as I walk  
There's springing and melody and giddi-  
ness,

And old quaint turns and passages of  
my youth,

Dreams long forgotten, little in them-  
selves,

Return to me — whatever may amuse  
me:

And earth seems in a truce with me, and  
heaven

Accords with me, all things suspend their  
strife,

The very cicala laughs "There goes he,  
and there!

Feast him, the time is short; he is on  
his way

For the world's sake: feast him this once,  
our friend!"

And in return for all this, I can trip  
Cheerfully up the scaffold-steps. I go  
This evening, mother!

*Mother.* But mistrust yourself —  
Mistrust the judgment you pronounce  
on him!

*Luigi.* Oh, there I feel — am sure that  
I am right!

*Mother.* Mistrust your judgment then,  
of the mere means

To this wild enterprise: say, you are  
right, —

Now should one in your state e'er bring  
to pass

What would require a cool head, a cool  
heart,

And a calm hand? You never will  
escape.

*Luigi.* Escape? To even wish that,  
would spoil all.

The dying is best part of it. Too much  
Have I enjoyed these fifteen years of  
mine,

To leave myself excuse for longer life:  
Was not life pressed down, running o'er  
with joy,

That I might finish with it ere my fellows  
Who, sparerier feasted, make a longer  
stay?

I was put at the board-head, helped to  
all

At first; I rise up happy and content.  
God must be glad one loves his world so  
much.

I can give news of earth to all the dead  
Who ask me: — last year's sunsets, and  
great stars

Which had a right to come first and see  
ebb

The crimson wave that drifts the sun  
away —

Those crescent moons with notched and  
burning rims

That strengthened into sharp fire, and  
there stood,

Impatient of the azure — and that day  
In March, a double rainbow stopped the

storm —  
May's warm slow yellow moonlit summer  
nights —

Gone are they, but I have them in my  
soul!

*Mother.* (He will not go!)

*Luigi.* You smile at  
me? 'Tis true, —

Voluptuousness, grotesqueness, ghastli-  
ness,

Environ my devotedness as quaintly  
As round about some antique altar

wreathe  
The rose festoons, goats' horns, and  
oxen's skulls.

*Mother.* See now: you reach the city,  
you must cross

His threshold — how?

*Luigi.* Oh, that's if we conspired!  
Then would come pains in plenty, as you  
guess —

But guess not how the qualities most fit  
For such an office, qualities I have,

Would little stead me, otherwise em-  
ployed,

Yet prove of rarest merit only here.  
Everyone knows for what his excellence

Will serve, but no one ever will consider  
For what his worst defect might serve:

and yet  
Have you not seen me range our coppice  
yonder

In search of a distorted ash? — I find  
The wry spoil branch a natural perfect

bow.

Fancy the thrice-sage, thrice-precau-  
tioned man

Arriving at the palace of my errand!  
No, no! I have a handsome dress packed

up —

White satin here, to set off my black  
hair;

In I shall march — for you may watch  
your life out

Behind thick walls, make friends there  
to betray you;

More than one man spoils everything.  
March straight —

Only, no clumsy knife to fumble for,  
Take the great gate, and walk (not  
saunter) on

Through guards and guards — I have  
rehearsed it all

Inside the turret here a hundred times.  
Don't ask the way of whom you meet,  
observe!

But where they cluster thickest is the  
door

Of doors; they'll let you pass — they'll  
never blab

Each to the other, he knows not the  
favorite,

Whence he is bound and what's his busi-  
ness now.

Walk in — straight up to him; you have  
no knife:

Be prompt, how should he scream?  
Then out with you!

Italy, Italy, my Italy!

You're free, you're free! Oh mother, I  
could dream

They got about me — Andrea from his  
exile,

Pier from his dungeon, Gualtier from his  
grave!

*Mother.* Well, you shall go. Yet  
seems this patriotism

The easiest virtue for a selfish man

To acquire: he loves himself — and next,  
the world —

If he must love beyond, — but naught  
between:

As a short-sighted man sees naught mid-  
way

His body and the sun above. But you  
Are my adored Luigi, ever obedient

To my least wish, and running o'er with  
love:

I could not call you cruel or unkind.

Once more, your ground for killing him  
— then go!

*Luigi.* Now do you try me, or make  
sport of me?

How first the Austrians got these prov-  
inces . . .

(If that is all, I'll satisfy you soon)

— Never by conquest but by cunning, for  
That treaty whereby . . .

*Mother.* Well!

*Luigi.* (Sure, he's arrived,  
The tell-tale cuckoo: spring's his confi-  
dant,

And he lets out her April purposes!)  
Or . . . better go at once to modern  
time.

He has . . . they have . . . in fact, I  
understand

But can't restate the matter: that's my  
boast:

Others could reason it out to you, and  
prove

Things they have made me feel.

*Mother.* Why go to-night?

Morn's for adventure. Jupiter is now

A morning-star. I cannot hear you,  
Luigi!

*Luigi.* "I am the bright and morning-

star," saith God —

And "to such an one I give the morning-  
star."

The gift of the morning-star! Have I  
God's gift

Of the morning-star?

*Mother.* Chiara will love to see

That Jupiter an evening-star next June.

*Luigi.* True, mother." Well for those  
who live through June!

Great noontides, thunder-storms, all  
glaring pomps

That triumph at the heels of June the  
god

Leading his revel through our leafy world.  
Yes, Chiara will be here.

*Mother.* In June: remember.

Yourself appointed that month for her  
coming.

*Luigi.* Was that low noise the echo?

*Mother.* The night wind,

She must be grown — with her blue eyes  
upturned

As if life were one long and sweet sur-  
prise:

In June she comes.

*Luigi.* We were to see together

The Titian at Treviso. There, again!

[From without is heard the voice of  
PIPPA singing —

*A king lived long ago,  
In the morning of the world,  
When earth was nigher heaven than now;  
And the king's locks curled,  
Disparting o'er a forehead full  
As the milk-white space 'twixt horn and horn  
Of some sacrificial bull —  
Only calm as a babe new-born:  
For he was got to a sleepy mood,  
So safe from all decrepitude,*



*Age with its bane, so sure gone by,  
(The gods so loved him while he dreamed)  
That, having lived thus long, there seemed  
No need the king should ever die.*

Luigi. No need that sort of king  
should ever die!

*Among 'he rocks his city was:  
Before his palace, in the sun,  
He sat to see his people pass,  
And judge them every one  
From its threshold of smooth stone.  
They hailed him many a valley-thief  
Caught in the sheep-pens, robber-chief  
Swarthy and shameless, beggar-cheat,  
Spy-prowler, or rough pirate found  
On the sea-sand left aground;  
And sometimes clung about his feet,  
With bleeding lip and burning cheek,  
A woman, bitterest wrong to speak  
Of one with sullen thickset brows:  
And sometimes from the prison-house  
The angry priests a pale wretch brought,  
Who through some chink had pushed and  
pressed*

*On knees and elbows, belly and breast,  
Worm-like into the temple, — caught  
He was by the very god,  
Who ever in the darkness strode  
Backward and forward, keeping watch  
O'er his brazen bowls, such rogues to catch!  
These, all and every one,  
The king judged, sitting in the sun.*

Luigi. That king should still judge,  
sitting in the sun!

*His councillors, on left and right,  
Looked anxious up, — but no surprise  
Disturbed the king's old smiling eyes  
Where the very blue had turned to white.  
'Tis said, a Python scared one day  
The breathless city, till he came,  
With forked tongue and eyes on flame,  
Where the old king sat to judge alway;  
But when he saw the sweepy hair  
Girt with a crown of berries rare  
Which the god will hardly give to wear  
To the maiden who singeth, dancing bare  
In the altar-smoke by the pine-torch lights,  
At his wondrous forest rites, —  
Seeing this he did not dare  
Approach that threshold in the sun,  
Assault the old king smiling there.  
Such grace had kings when the world begun!*

[PIPPA passes.

Luigi. And such grace have they, now  
that the world ends!

The Python at the city, on the throne,  
And brave men, God would crown for  
slaying him,

Lurk in by-corners lest they fall his prey.  
Are crowns yet to be won in this late  
time

Which weakness makes me hesitate to  
reach?

'Tis God's voice calls: how could I stay?  
Farewell!

*Talk by the way, while PIPPA is passing  
from the Turret to the Bishop's Brother's  
House, close to the Duomo S. Maria.  
Poor GIRLS sitting on the steps.*

1st Girl. There goes a swallow to  
Venice — the stout seafarer!  
Seeing those birds fly, makes one wish  
for wings.

Let us all wish; you, wish first!

2d Girl. I? This sunset  
To finish.

3d Girl. That old — somebody I know,  
Grayer and older than my grandfather,  
To give me the same treat he gave last  
week —

Feeding me on his knee with fig-  
peckers,  
Lampreys and red Breganze-wine, and  
mumbling

The while some folly about how well I  
fare,

Let sit and eat my supper quietly:

Since had he not himself been late this  
morning

Detained at — never mind where, —  
had he not . . .

"Eh, baggage, had I not!" —

2d Girl. How she can lie!

3d Girl. Look there — by the nails!

2d Girl. What makes your fingers red?

3d Girl. Dipping them into wine to  
write bad words with

On the bright table: how he laughed!

1st Girl. My turn.  
Spring's come and summer's coming. I  
would wear

A long loose gown, down to the feet and  
hands,

With plaits here, close about the throat,  
all day;

And all night lie, the cool long nights in  
bed;

And have new milk to drink, apples to eat,

Deuzans and junetings, leather-coats . . .

ah, I should say,

This is away in the fields — miles!

*3d Girl.*

Say at once

You'd be at home: she'd always be at home!

Now comes the story of the farm among  
The cherry orchards, and how April  
snowed

White blossoms on her as she ran. Why,  
fool,

They've rubbed the chalk-mark out, how  
tall you were,

Twisted your starling's neck, broken his  
cage,

Made a dung-hill of your garden!

*1st Girl.*

They destroy

My garden since I left them? well —  
perhaps

I would have done so: so I hope they  
have!

A fig-tree curled out of our cottage wall;  
They called it mine, I have forgotten why.  
It must have been there long ere I was  
born:

*Cric — cric* — I think I hear the wasps  
o'erhead

Pricking the papers strung to flutter  
there

And keep off birds in fruit-time — coarse  
long papers,

And the wasps eat them, prick them  
through and through.

*3d Girl.* — How her mouth twitches!

Where was I? — before

She broke in with her wishes and long  
gowns

And wasps — would I be such a fool! —  
Oh, here!

This is my way: I answer every one

Who asks me why I make so much of  
him —

(If you say "you love him" — straight  
"he'll not be gulled!")

"He that seduced me when I was a girl  
Thus high — had eyes like yours, or hair  
like yours,

Brown, red, white," — as the case may  
be: that pleases.

See how that beetle burnishes in the path!  
There sparkles he along the dust: and  
there —

Your journey to that maize tuft spoiled  
at least!

*1st Girl.* When I was young, they  
said if you killed one

Of those sunshiny beetles, that his friend  
Up there, would shine no more that day  
nor next.

*2d Girl.* When you were young? nor  
are you young, that's true.

How your plump arms, that were, have  
dropped away!

Why, I can span them. Cecco beats you  
still?

No matter, so you keep your curious hair.  
I wish they'd find a way to dye our hair  
Your color — any lighter tint, indeed  
Than black: the men say they are sick of  
black,

Black eyes, black hair!

*4th Girl.* Sick of yours, like enough.  
Do you pretend you ever tasted lampreys  
And ortolans? Giovita, of the palace,  
Engaged (but there's no trusting him)  
to slice me

Polenta with a knife that had cut up

An ortolan.

*2d Girl.* Why, there! Is not that  
Pippa

We are to talk to, under the window, —  
quick! —

Where the lights are?

*1st Girl.* That she? No, or she would  
sing,

For the Intendant said . . .

*3d Girl.* Oh, you sing first!

Then, if she listens and comes close . . .  
I'll tell you, —

Sing that song the young English noble  
made,

Who took you for the purest of the pure,  
And meant to leave the world for you —  
what fun!

*2d Girl.* [*Sings.*]

*You'll love me yet! — and I can tarry*

*Your love's protracted growing:*

*June reared that bunch of flowers you carry,*  
*From seeds of April's sowing.*

*I plant a heartfelt now: some seed*

*At least is sure to strike,*

*And yield — what you'll not pluck indeed,*  
*Not love, but, may be, like.*

*You'll look at least on love's remains,*

*A grave's one violet:*

*Your look? — that pays a thousand pains.*  
*What's death? You'll love me yet!*

*3d Girl.* [*To PIPPA who approaches.*]

Oh, you may come closer — we shall not

eat you! Why, you seem the very person that the great rich handsome Englishman has fallen so violently in love with. I'll tell you all about it.

#### IV. NIGHT

*Inside the Palace by the Duomo. MONSIGNOR, dismissing his Attendants.*

*Monsignor.* Thanks, friends, many thanks! I chiefly desire life now, that I may recompense every one of you. Most I know something of already. What, a repast prepared? *Benedicto benedicatur* . . . ugh, ugh! Where was I? Oh, as you were remarking, Ugo, the weather is mild, very unlike winter-weather: but I am a Sicilian, you know, and shiver in your Julys here. To be sure, when 'twas full summer at Messina, as we priests used to cross in procession the great square on Assumption Day, you might see our thickest yellow tapers twist suddenly in two, each like a falling star, or sink down on themselves in a gore of wax. But go, my friends, but go! [*To the Intendant.*] Not you, Ugo! [*The others leave the apartment.*] I have long wanted to converse with you, Ugo.

*Intendant.* Uguccio—

*Mon.* . . . 'guccio Stefani, man! of Ascoli, Fermo and Fossombruno;—what I do need instructing about, are these accounts of your administration of my poor brother's affairs. Ugh! I shall never get through a third part of your accounts; take some of these dainties before we attempt it, however. Are you bashful to that degree? For me, a crust and water suffice.

*Inten.* Do you choose this especial night to question me?

*Mon.* This night, Ugo. You have managed my late brother's affairs since the death of our elder brother: fourteen years and a month, all but three days. On the Third of December, I find him . . .

*Inten.* If you have so intimate an acquaintance with your brother's affairs, you will be tender of turning so far back: they will hardly bear looking into, so far back.

*Mon.* Ay, ay, ugh, ugh,—nothing but disappointments here below! I remarked a considerable payment made to yourself on this Third of December. Talk

of disappointments! There was a young fellow here, Jules, a foreign sculptor I did my utmost to advance, that the Church might be a gainer by us both: he was going on hopefully enough, and of a sudden he notifies to me some marvellous change that has happened in his notions of Art. Here's his letter,—“He never had a clearly conceived Ideal within his brain till to-day. Yet since his hand could manage a chisel, he has practised expressing other men's Ideals; and, in the very perfection he has attained to, he foresees an ultimate failure: his unconscious hand will pursue its prescribed course of old years, and will reproduce with a fatal expertness the ancient types, let the novel one appear never so palpably to his spirit. There is but one method of escape: confiding the virgin type to as chaste a hand, he will turn painter instead of sculptor, and paint, not carve, its characteristics,”—strike out, I dare say, a school like Correggio; how think you, Ugo?

*Inten.* Is Correggio a painter?

*Mon.* Foolish Jules! and yet, after all, why foolish? He may—probably will—fail egregiously; but if there should arise a new painter, will it not be in some such way, by a poet now, or a musician (spirits who have conceived and perfected an Ideal through some other channel), transferring it to this, and escaping our conventional roads by pure ignorance of them; eh, Ugo? If you have no appetite, talk at least, Ugo?

*Inten.* Sir, I can submit no longer to this course of yours. First, you select the group of which I formed one,—next you thin it gradually,—always retaining me with your smile,—and so do you proceed till you have fairly got me alone with you between four stone walls. And now then? Let this farce, this chatter end now: what is it you want with me?

*Mon.* Ugo!

*Inten.* From the instant you arrived, I felt your smile on me as you questioned me about this and the other article in those papers—why your brother should have given me this villa, that *podere*,—and your nod at the end meant,—what?

*Mon.* Possibly that I wished for no loud talk here. If once you set me coughing, Ugo!—

*Inten.* I have your brother's hand and seal to all I possess: now ask me what for! what service I did him—ask me!

*Mon.* I would better not: I should rip up old disgraces, let out my poor brother's weaknesses. By the way, Maffeo of Forlì (which, I forgot to observe, is your true name,) was the interdict ever taken off you for robbing that church at Cesna?

*Inten.* No, nor needs be: for when I murdered your brother's friend, Pasquale, for him . . .

*Mon.* Ah, he employed you in that business, did he? Well, I must let you keep, as you say, this villa and that *podere* for fear the world should find out my relations were of so indifferent a stamp? Maffeo, my family is the oldest in Messina, and century after century have my progenitors gone on polluting themselves with every wickedness under heaven: my own father . . . rest his soul!—I have, I know, a chapel to support that it may rest: my dear two dead brothers were,—what you know tolerably well; I, the youngest, might have rivalled them in vice, if not in wealth: but from my boyhood I came out from among them, and so am not partaker of their plagues. My glory springs from another source; or if from this, by contrast only,—for I, the bishop, am the brother of your employers, Ugo. I hope to repair some of their wrong, however; so far as my brother's ill-gotten treasure reverts to me, I can stop the consequences of his crime: and not one *soldo* shall escape me. Maffeo, the sword we quiet men spurn away, you shrewd knaves pick up and commit murders with; what opportunities the virtuous forego, the villanous seize. Because, to pleasure myself apart from other considerations, my food would be millet-cake, my dress sackcloth, and my couch straw,—am I therefore to let you, the off-scouring of the earth, seduce the poor and ignorant by appropriating a pomp these will be sure to think lessens the abominations so unaccountably and exclusively associated with it? Must I let villas and *poderi* go to you, a murderer and thief, that you may beget by means of them other murderers and thieves? No—if my cough would but allow me to speak!

*Inten.* What am I to expect? You are going to punish me?

*Mon.* Must punish you, Maffeo. I cannot afford to cast away a chance. I have whole centuries of sin to redeem, and only a month or two of life to do it in. How should I dare to say . . .

*Inten.* "Forgive us our trespasses"?

*Mon.* My friend, it is because I avow myself a very worm, sinful beyond measure, that I reject a line of conduct you would applaud perhaps. Shall I proceed, as it were, a-pardoning?—I?—who have no symptom of reason to assume that aught less than my strenuous efforts will keep myself out of mortal sin, much less keep others out. No: I do trespass, but will not double that by allowing you to trespass.

*Inten.* And suppose the villas are not your brother's to give, nor yours to take? Oh, you are hasty enough just now!

*Mon.* 1, 2—N<sup>o</sup> 3!—ay, can you read the substance of a letter, N<sup>o</sup> 3, I have received from Rome? It is precisely on the ground there mentioned, of the suspicion I have that a certain child of my late elder brother, who would have succeeded to his estates, was murdered in infancy by you, Maffeo, at the instigation of my late younger brother—that the Pontiff enjoins on me not merely the bringing that Maffeo to condign punishment, but the taking all pains, as guardian of the infant's heritage for the Church, to recover it parcel by parcel, howsoever, whensoever, and wheresoever. While you are now gnawing those fingers, the police are engaged in sealing up your papers, Maffeo, and the mere raising my voice brings my people from the next room to dispose of yourself. But I want you to confess quietly, and save me raising my voice. Why, man, do I not know the old story? The heir between the succeeding heir, and this heir's rufianly instrument, and their complot's effect, and the life of fear and bribes and ominous smiling silence? Did you throttle or stab my brother's infant? Come now!

*Inten.* So old a story, and tell it no better? When did such an instrument ever produce such an effect? Either the child smiles in his face; or, most likely, he is not fool enough to put himself in the employer's power so thoroughly: the



child is always ready to produce — as you say — howsoever, wheresoever, and whensoever.

*Mon.* Liar!

*Inten.* Strike me? Ah, so might a father chastise! I shall sleep soundly to-night at least, though the gallows await me to-morrow; for what a life did I lead! Carlo of Cesena reminds me of his connivance, every time I pay his annuity; which happens commonly thrice a year. If I remonstrate, he will confess all to the good bishop — you!

*Mon.* I see through the trick, caitiff! I would you spoke truth for once. All shall be sifted, however — seven times sifted.

*Inten.* And how my absurd riches encumbered me! I dared not lay claim to above half of my possessions. Let me but once unbosom myself, glorify Heaven, and die!

Sir, you are no brutal dastardly idiot like your brother I frightened to death: let us understand one another. Sir, I will make away with her for you — the girl — here close at hand; not the stupid obvious kind of killing; do not speak — know nothing of her nor of me! I see her every day — saw her this morning: of course there is to be no killing; but at Rome the courtesans perish off every three years, and I can entice her thither — have indeed begun operations already. There is a certain lusty blue-eyed florid-complexioned English knave, I and the Police employ occasionally. You assent, I perceive — no, that's not it — assent I do not say — but you will let me convert my present havings and holdings into cash, and give me time to cross the Alps? 'Tis but a little black-eyed pretty singing Felippa, gay silk-winding girl. I have kept her out of harm's way up to this present; for I always intended to make your life a plague to you with her. 'Tis as well settled once and forever. Some women I have procured will pass Bluphocks, my handsome scoundrel, off for somebody; and once Pippa entangled! — you conceive? Through her singing? Is it a bargain?

[From without is heard the voice of PIPPA singing —

*Overhead the tree-tops meet,  
Flowers and grass spring 'neath one's feet;*

*There was naught above me, naught below,*

*My childhood had not learned to know:  
For, what are the voices of birds*

*— Ah, and of beasts, but words, our words,*

*Only so much more sweet?*

*The knowledge of that with my life begun.*

*But I had so near made out the sun,*

*And counted your stars, the seven and one,*

*Like the fingers of my hand:*

*Nay, I could all but understand*

*Wherefore through heaven the white moon ranges;*

*And just when out of her soft fifty changes*

*No unfamiliar face might over-look me —  
Suddenly God took me.*

[PIPPA passes.

*Mon.* [Springing up.] My people — one and all — within there! Gag this villain — tie him hand and foot! He dares . . . I know not half he dares — but remove him — quick! *Miserere mei, Domine!* Quick, I say!

PIPPA'S Chamber again. *She enters it.*

The bee with his comb,  
The mouse at her dray,  
The grub in his tomb,  
Wile winter away;  
But the fire-fly and hedge-shrew and lob-worm, I pray,

How fare they?

Ha, ha, thanks for your counsel, my Zanze!

"Feast upon lampreys, quaff Bre-ganze" —

The summer of life so easy to spend,  
And care for to-morrow so soon put away!  
But winter hastens at summer's end,  
And fire-fly, hedge-shrew, lob-worm, I pray,

How fare they?

No bidding me then to . . . what did Zanze say?

"Pare your nails pearlwise, get your small feet shoes

More like" . . . (what said she?) —  
"and less like canoes!"

How pert that girl was! — would I be those pert

Impudent staring women! It had done me,

However, surely no such mighty hurt



To learn his name who passed that jest  
upon me :

No foreigner, that I can recollect,  
Came, as she says, a month since, to in-  
spect

Our silk-mills — none with blue eyes and  
thick rings

Of raw-silk-colored hair, at all events.

Well, if old Luca keep his good intents,  
We shall do better, see what next year  
brings !

I may buy shoes, my Zanze, not appear  
More destitute than you perhaps next  
year !

Bluph . . . something ! I had caught the  
uncouth name

But for Monsignor's people's sudden  
clatter

Above us — bound to spoil such idle  
chatter

As ours : it were indeed a serious matter  
If silly talk like ours should put to shame  
The pious man, the man devoid of blame,  
The . . . ah but — ah but, all the same,  
No mere mortal has a right

To carry that exalted air ;

Best people are not angels quite :

While — not the worst of people's doings  
scare

The devil ; so there's that proud look to  
spare !

Which is mere counsel to myself,  
mind ! for

I have just been the holy Monsignor :

And I was you, too, Luigi's gentle mother,  
And you too, Luigi ! — how that Luigi  
started

Out of the turret — doubtlessly departed  
On some good errand or another,  
For he passed just now in a traveller's  
trim,

And the sullen company that prowled

About his path, I noticed, scowled

As if they had lost a prey in him.

And I was Jules the sculptor's bride,

And I was Ottima beside,

And now what am I ? — tired of fooling.

Day for folly, night for schooling !

New Year's day is over and spent,

Ill or well, I must be content.

Even my lily's asleep, I vow :

Wake up — here's a friend I've plucked  
you !

Call this flower a heart's-ease now !

Something rare, let me instruct you,

Is this, with petals triply swollen,

Three times spotted, thrice the pollen ;  
While the leaves and parts that witness  
Old proportions and their fitness,  
Here remain unchanged, unmoved now ;  
Call this pampered thing improved now !

Suppose there's a king of the flowers

And a girl-show held in his bowers —

"Look ye, buds, this growth of ours,"

Says he, "Zanze from the Brenta,

I have made her gorge polenta

Till both cheeks are near as bouncing

As her . . . name there's no pronouncing !

See this heightened color too,

For she swilled Breganze wine

Till her nose turned deep carmine ;

'Twas but white when wild she grew.

And only by this Zanze's eyes

Of which we could not change the size,

The magnitude of all achieved

Otherwise, may be perceived."

Oh what a drear dark close to my poor  
day !

How could that red sun drop in that  
black cloud ?

Ah Pippa, morning's rule is moved away,  
Dispensed with, never more to be al-  
lowed !

Day's turn is over, now arrives the  
night's.

Oh lark, be day's apostle

To mavis, merle and throstle,

Bid them their betters jostle

From day and its delights !

But at night, brother owl, over the  
woods,

Toll the world to thy chantry ;

Sing to the bats' sleek sisterhoods

Full complines with gallantry :

Then, owls and bats,

Cowls and twats,

Monks and nuns, in a cloister's moods,

Adjourn to the oak-stump pantry !

[After she has begun to undress herself.

Now, one thing I should like to really  
know :

How near I ever might approach all these

I only fancied being, this long day :

— Approach, I mean, so as to touch them  
so

As to . . . in some way . . . move  
them — if you please,

Do good or evil to them some slight way.

For instance, if I wind

Silk to-morrow, my silk may bind

[Sitting on the bedside

And border Ottima's cloak's hem.  
 Ah me, and my important part with  
 them,  
 This morning's hymn half promised when  
 I rose!  
 True in some sense or other, I suppose.  
 [As she lies down  
 God bless me! I can pray no more to-  
 night.  
 No doubt, some way or other, hymns say  
 right.

*All service ranks the same with God —  
 With God, whose puppets, best and worst,  
 Are we; there is no last nor first.*

[She sleeps.  
 1841.

## CAVALIER TUNES

### I. MARCHING ALONG

KENTISH Sir Byng stood for his King,  
 Bidding the crop-headed Parliament  
 swing:  
 And, pressing a troop unable to stoop  
 And see the rogues flourish and honest  
 folk droop,  
 Marched them along, fifty-score strong,  
 Great-hearted gentlemen, singing this  
 song.

God for King Charles! Pym and such  
 carles  
 To the Devil that prompts 'em their  
 treasonous parles!  
 Cavaliers, up! Lips from the cup,  
 Hands from the pasty, nor bite take nor  
 sup  
 Till you're —

CHORUS. — Marching along, fifty-score  
 strong,  
 Great-hearted gentlemen, sing-  
 ing this song.

Hampden to hell, and his obsequies'  
 knell.  
 Serve Hazelrig, Fiennes, and young Harry  
 as well!  
 England, good cheer! Rupert is near!  
 Kentish and loyalists, keep we not here,  
 CHORUS. — Marching along, fifty-score  
 strong,  
 Great-hearted gentlemen, sing-  
 ing this song?

Then, God for King Charles! Pym and  
 his snarls  
 To the Devil that pricks on such pestilent  
 carles!

Hold by the right, you double your might;  
 So, onward to Nottingham, fresh for  
 the fight,

CHORUS. — March we along, fifty-score  
 strong,  
 Great-hearted gentlemen, sing-  
 ing this song!

### II. GIVE A ROUSE

KING CHARLES, and who'll do him right  
 now?

King Charles, and who's ripe for fight  
 now?

Give a rouse: here's, in hell's despite  
 now,

King Charles!

Who gave me the goods that went since?

Who raised me the house that sank once?

Who helped me to gold I spent since?

Who found me in wine you drank once?

CHORUS. — King Charles, and who'll do  
 him right now?

King Charles, and who's ripe  
 for fight now?

Give a rouse: here's, in hell's  
 despite now,

King Charles!

To whom used my boy George quaff else,  
 By the old fool's side that begot him?

For whom did he cheer and laugh else,

While Noll's damned troopers shot him?

CHORUS. — King Charles, and who'll  
 do him right now?

King Charles, and who's ripe  
 for fight now?

Give a rouse: here's, in hell's  
 despite now,

King Charles!

### III. BOOT AND SADDLE

BOOT, saddle, to horse and away!

Rescue my castle before the hot day

Brightens to blue from its silvery gray.

CHORUS. — Boot, saddle, to horse and  
 away!

Ride past the suburbs, asleep as you'd  
 say;

Many's the friend there, will listen and  
 pray

"God's luck to gallants that strike up the lay —

CHORUS. — Boot, saddle, to horse, and away!"

Forty miles off, like a roebuck at bay,  
Flouts Castle Brancepeth the Round-heads' array:

Who laughs, "Good fellows ere this, by my fay,

CHORUS. — Boot, saddle, to horse, and away!"

Who? My wife Gertrude; that, honest and gay,

Laughs when you talk of surrendering,  
"Nay!

I've better counsellors; what counsel they?  
CHORUS. — Boot, saddle to horse, and away!" 1842.

#### THROUGH THE METIDJA TO ABD-EL-KADR

As I ride, as I ride,  
With a full heart for my guide,  
So its tide rocks my side,  
As I ride, as I ride,  
That, as I were double-eyed,  
He, in whom our Tribes confide,  
Is descried, ways untried,  
As I ride, as I ride.

As I ride, as I ride  
To our Chief and his Allied,  
Who dares chide my heart's pride  
As I ride, as I ride?  
Or are witnesses denied —  
Through the desert waste and wide  
Do I glide unspied  
As I ride, as I ride?

As I ride, as I ride,  
When an inner voice has cried,  
The sands slide, nor abide  
(As I ride, as I ride)  
O'er each visioned homicide  
That came vaunting (has he lied?)  
To reside — where he died,  
As I ride, as I ride.

As I ride, as I ride,  
Ne'er has spur my swift horse plied,  
Yet his hide, streaked and pied,  
As I ride, as I ride,

Shows where sweat has sprung and dried,  
— Zebra-footed, ostrich-thighed —  
How has vied stride with stride  
As I ride, as I ride!

As I ride, as I ride,  
Could I loose what Fate has tied,  
Ere I pried, she should hide  
(As I ride, as I ride)  
All that's meant me — satisfied  
When the Prophet and the Bride  
Stop veins I'd have subside  
As I ride, as I ride!

1842.

#### CRISTINA

SHE should never have looked at me  
If she meant I should not love her!  
There are plenty . . . men you call such,  
I suppose . . . she may discover  
All her soul to, if she pleases,  
And yet leave much as she found  
them:  
But I'm not so, and she knew it  
When she fixed me, glancing round  
them.

What? To fix me thus meant nothing?  
But I can't tell (there's my weakness)  
What her look said! — no vile cant, sure,  
About "need to strew the bleakness  
Of some lone shore with its pearl-seed,  
That the sea feels" — no "strange  
yearning  
That such souls have, most to lavish  
Where there's chance of least return-  
ing."

Oh, we're sunk enough here, God knows!  
But not quite so sunk that moments,  
Sure though seldom, are denied us,  
When the spirit's true endowments  
Stand out plainly from its false ones,  
And apprise it if pursuing  
Or the right way or the wrong way,  
To its triumph or undoing.

There are flashes struck from midnights,  
There are fire-flames noondays kindle,  
Whereby piled-up honors perish,  
Whereby swollen ambitions dwindle,  
While just this or that poor impulse,  
Which for once had play unstified,  
Seems the sole work of a lifetime,  
That away the rest have trifled.

Doubt you if, in some such moment,  
 As she fixed me, she felt clearly,  
 Ages past the soul existed,  
 Here an age 'tis resting merely,  
 And hence fleets again for ages,  
 While the true end, sole and single,  
 It stops here for is, this love-way,  
 With some other soul to mingle?

Else it loses what it lived for,  
 And eternally must lose it;  
 Better ends may be in prospect,  
 Deeper blisses (if you choose it),  
 But this life's end and this love-bliss  
 Have been lost here. Doubt you  
 whether  
 This she felt as, looking at me,  
 Mine and her souls rushed together?

Oh, observe! Of course, next moment,  
 The world's honors in derision,  
 Trampled out the light forever:  
 Never fear but there's provision  
 Of the devil's to quench knowledge  
 Lest we walk the earth in rapture!  
 — Making those who catch God's secret  
 Just so much more prize their capture!

Such am I; the secret's mine now!  
 She has lost me, I have gained her;  
 Her soul's mine: and thus, grown perfect,  
 I shall pass my life's remainder,  
 Life will just hold out the proving  
 Both our powers, alone and blended:  
 And then come the next life quickly!  
 This world's use will have been ended.  
 1842.

#### INCIDENT OF THE FRENCH CAMP

You know, we French stormed Ratisbon:  
 A mile or so away,  
 On a little mound, Napoleon  
 Stood on our storming-day;  
 With neck out-thrust, you fancy how,  
 Legs wide, arms locked behind,  
 As if to balance the prone brow  
 Oppressive with its mind.

Just as perhaps he mused "My plans  
 That soar, to earth may fall,  
 Let once my army-leader Lannes  
 Waver at yonder wall," —

Out 'twixt the battery-smokes there flew  
 A rider, bound on bound  
 Full-galloping; nor bridle drew  
 Until he reached the mound.

Then off there flung in smiling joy,  
 And held himself erect  
 By just his horse's mane, a boy:  
 You hardly could suspect —  
 (So tight he kept his lips compressed,  
 Scarce any blood came through)  
 You looked twice ere you saw his breast;  
 Was all but shot in two.

"Well," cried he, "Emperor, by God's  
 grace  
 We've got you Ratisbon!  
 The Marshal's in the market-place,  
 And you'll be there anon  
 To see your flag-bird flap his vans  
 Where I, to heart's desire,  
 Perched him!" The chief's eye flashed;  
 his plans  
 Soared up again like fire.

The chief's eye flashed; but presently  
 Softened itself, as sheathes  
 A film the mother-eagle's eye  
 When her bruised eaglet breathes;  
 "You're wounded!" "Nay," the soldier's  
 pride  
 Touched to the quick, he said:  
 "I'm killed, Sir!" And his chief be-  
 side,  
 Smiling the boy fell dead. 1842.

#### MY LAST DUCHESS

FERRARA

THAT's my last Duchess painted on the  
 wall,  
 Looking as if she were alive. I call  
 That piece a wonder, now: Frà Pan-  
 dolf's hands  
 Worked busily a day, and there she  
 stands.  
 Will't please you sit and look at her? I  
 said  
 "Frà Pandolf" by design, for never read  
 Strangers like you that pictured coun-  
 tenance,  
 The depth and passion of its earnest  
 glance,  
 But to myself they turned (since none  
 puts by

The curtain I have drawn for you, but I)  
 And seemed as they would ask me, if  
 they durst,  
 How such a glance came there; so, not  
 the first  
 Are you to turn and ask thus. Sir, 'twas  
 not  
 Her husband's presence only, called that  
 spot  
 Of joy into the Duchess' cheek: perhaps  
 Frà Pandolf chanced to say, "Her mantle  
 laps  
 Over my lady's wrist too much," or  
 "Paint  
 Must never hope to reproduce the faint  
 Half-flush that dies along her throat:"  
 such stuff  
 Was courtesy, she thought, and cause  
 enough  
 For calling up that spot of joy. She had  
 A heart — how shall I say? — too soon  
 made glad.  
 Too easily impressed: she liked whate'er  
 She looked on, and her looks went every-  
 where.  
 Sir, 'twas all one! My favor at her  
 breast,  
 The dropping of the daylight in the West,  
 The bough of cherries some officious fool  
 Broke in the orchard for her, the white  
 mule  
 She rode with round the terrace — all and  
 each  
 Would draw from her alike the approving  
 speech,  
 Or blush, at least. She thanked men, —  
 good! but thanked  
 Somehow — I know not how — as if she  
 ranked  
 My gift of a nine-hundred-years-old name  
 With anybody's gift. Who'd stoop to  
 blame  
 This sort of trifling? Even had you skill  
 In speech — (which I have not) — to  
 make your will  
 Quite clear to such an one, and say,  
 "Just this  
 Or that in you disgusts me; here you  
 miss,  
 Or there exceed the mark" — and if she  
 let  
 Herself be lessoned so, nor plainly set  
 Her wits to yours, forsooth, and made  
 excuse,  
 — E'en then would be some stooping;  
 and I choose

Never to stoop. Oh sir, she smiled, no  
 doubt,  
 Whene'er I passed her; but who passed  
 without  
 Much the same smile? This grew; I  
 gave commands;  
 Then all smiles stopped together. There  
 she stands  
 As if alive. Will't please you rise? We'll  
 meet  
 The company below, then. I repeat,  
 The Count your master's known munifi-  
 cence  
 Is ample warrant that no just pretence  
 Of mine for dowry will be disallowed;  
 Though his fair daughter's self, as I  
 avowed  
 At starting, is my object. Nay, we'll go  
 Together down, sir. Notice Neptune,  
 though,  
 Taming a sea-horse, thought a rarity,  
 Which Claus of Innsbruck cast in bronze  
 for me!  
 1842.

#### IN A GONDOLA

##### *He sings*

I SEND my heart up to thee, all my heart  
 In this my singing.  
 For the stars help me, and the sea bears  
 part;  
 The very night is clinging  
 Closer to Venice' streets to leave one space  
 Above me, whence thy face  
 May light my joyous heart to thee its  
 dwelling place.

##### *She speaks*

Say after me, and try to say  
 My very words, as if each word  
 Came from you of your own accord,  
 In your own voice, in your own way:  
 "This woman's heart and soul and brain  
 Are mine as much as this gold chain  
 She bids me wear; which" (say again)  
 "I choose to make by cherishing  
 A precious thing, or choose to fling  
 Over the boat-side, ring by ring."  
 And yet once more say . . . no word  
 more!  
 Since words are only words. Give o'er!  
 Unless you call me, all the same,  
 Familiarly by my pet name,



Which if the Three should hear you call,  
 And me reply to, would proclaim  
 At once our secret to them all.  
 Ask of me, too, command me, blame, —  
 Do, break down the partition-wall  
 'Twixt us, the daylight world beholds  
 Curtained in dusk and splendid folds!  
 What's left but — all of me to take?  
 I am the Three's: prevent them, slake  
 Your thirst! 'Tis said, the Arab sage,  
 In practising with gems, can loose  
 Their subtle spirit in his cruce  
 And leave but ashes; so, sweet mage,  
 Leave them my ashes when thy use  
 Sucks out my soul, thy heritage!

*He sings*

Past we glide, and past, and past!  
 What's that poor Agnese doing  
 Where they make the shutters fast?  
 Gray Zanobi's just a-wooing  
 To his couch the purchased bride:  
 Past we glide!

Past we glide, and past, and past!  
 Why's the Pucci Palace flaring  
 Like a beacon to the blast?  
 Guests by hundreds, not one caring  
 If the dear host's neck were wried:  
 Past we glide!

*She Sings*

The moth's kiss, first!  
 Kiss me as if you made believe  
 You were not sure, this eve,  
 How my face, your flower, had pursed  
 Its petals up; so, here and there  
 You brush it, till I grow aware  
 Who wants me, and wide ope I burst.

The bee's kiss, now!  
 Kiss me as if you entered gay  
 My heart at some noonday,  
 A bud that dares not disallow  
 The claim, so all is rendered up,  
 And passively its shattered cup  
 Over your head to sleep I bow.

*He sings*

What are we two?  
 I am a Jew,  
 And carry thee, farther than friends can  
     pursue,  
 To a feast of our tribe;  
 Where they need thee to bribe

The devil that blasts them unless he  
     imbibe  
 Thy . . . Scatter the vision forever!  
     And now,  
 As of old, I am I, thou art thou!

Say again, what we are?  
 The sprite of a star,  
 I lure thee above where the destinies bar  
 My plumes their full play  
 Till a ruddier ray  
 Than my pale one announce there is  
     withering away  
 Some . . . Scatter the vision forever!  
     And now,  
 As of old, I am I, thou art thou!

*He muses*

Oh, which were best, to roam or rest?  
 The land's lap or the water's breast?  
 To sleep on yellow millet-sheaves,  
 Or swim in lucid shallows just  
 Eluding water-lily leaves,  
 An inch from Death's black fingers, thrust  
 To lock you, whom release he must;  
 Which life were best on Summer eves?

*He speaks, musing*

Lie back; could thought of mine improve  
     you?  
 From this shoulder let there spring  
 A wing; from this, another wing;  
 Wings, not legs and feet, shall move you!  
 Snow-white must they spring, to blend  
 With your flesh, but I intend  
 They shall deepen to the end,  
 Broader, into burning gold,  
 Till both wings crescent-wise enfold  
 Your perfect self, from 'neath your feet  
 To o'er your head, where, lo, they meet  
 As if a million sword-blades hurled  
 Defiance from you to the world!

Rescue me thou, the only real!  
 And scare away this mad ideal  
 That came, nor motions to depart!  
 Thanks! Now, stay ever as thou art!

*Still he muses*

What if the Three should catch at last  
 Thy serenader? While there's cast  
 Paul's cloak about my head, and fast  
 Gian pinions me, Himself has past  
 His stylet through my back; I reel;  
 And . . . is it thou I feel?

They trail me, these three godless knaves,  
Past every church that saints and saves,  
Nor stop till, where the cold sea raves  
By Lido's wet accursed graves,  
They scoop mine, roll me to its brink,  
And . . . on thy breast I sink !

*She replies, musing*

Dip your arm o'er the boat-side, elbow-deep,  
As I do : thus : were death so unlike sleep,  
Caught this way ? Death's to fear from  
flame or steel,  
Or poison doubtless ; but from water —  
feel !  
Go find the bottom ! Would you stay  
me ? There !  
Now pluck a great blade of that ribbon-  
grass  
To plait in where the foolish jewel was,  
I flung away : since you have praised my  
hair,  
'Tis proper to be choice in what I wear.

*He speaks*

Row home ? must we row home ? Too  
surely  
Know I where its front's demurely  
Over the Giudecca piled ;  
Window just with window mating,  
Door on door exactly waiting,  
All's the set face of a child :  
Behind it, where's a trace  
Of the staidness and reserve,  
And formal lines without a curve,  
In the same child's playing-face ?  
No two windows look one way  
O'er the small sea-water thread  
Below them. Ah, the autumn day  
I, passing, saw you overhead !  
First, out a cloud of curtain blew,  
Then a sweet cry, and last came you —  
To catch your lory that must needs  
Escape just then, of all times then,  
To peck a tall plant's fleecy seeds,  
And make me happiest of men.  
I scarce could breathe to see you reach  
So far back o'er the balcony  
To catch him ere he climbed too high  
Above you in the Smyrna peach,  
That quick the round smooth cord of gold,  
This coiled hair on your head, unrolled,  
Fell down you like a gorgeous snake  
The Roman girls were wont, of old,  
When Rome there was, for coolness' sake  
To let lie curling o'er their bosoms.

Dear lory, may his beak retain  
Ever its delicate rose stain  
As if the wounded lotus-blossoms  
Had marked their thief to know again !

Stay longer yet, for others' sake  
Than mine ! What should your chamber  
do ?

— With all its rarities that ache  
In silence while day lasts, but wake  
At night-time and their life renew,  
Suspended just to pleasure you  
Who brought against their will together  
These objects, and, while day lasts, weave  
Around them such a magic tether  
That dumb they look : your harp, believe.  
With all the sensitive tight strings  
Which dare not speak, now to itself  
Breathes slumberously, as if some elf

Went in and out the chords, his wings  
Make murmur wheresoe'er they graze,  
As an angel may, between the maze  
Of midnight palace-pillars, on  
And on, to sow God's plagues, have gone  
Through guilty glorious Babylon.  
And while such murmurs flow, the nymph  
Bends o'er the harp-top from her shell  
As the dry limpet for the lymph  
Come with a tune he knows so well.  
And how your statues' hearts must swell !  
And how your pictures must descend  
To see each other, friend with friend !  
Oh, could you take them by surprise,  
You'd find Schidone's eager Duke  
Doing the quaintest courtesies  
To that prim saint by Haste-thee-Luke !  
And, deeper into her rock den,  
Bold Castelfranco's Magdalen  
You'd find retreated from the ken  
Of that robed counsel-keeping Ser —  
As if the Tizian thinks of her,  
And is not, rather, gravely bent  
On seeing for himself what toys  
Are these, his progeny invent,  
What litter now the board employs  
Whereon he signed a document  
That got him murdered ! Each enjoys  
Its night so well, you cannot break  
The sport up, so, indeed must make  
More stay with me, for others' sake.

*She speaks*

To-morrow, if a harp-string, say,  
Is used to tie the jasmine back  
That overfloods my room with sweets,

Contrive your Zorzi somehow meets  
My Zanze! If the ribbon's black,  
The Three are watching: keep away!

Your gondola — let Zorzi wreathe  
A mesh of water-weeds about  
Its prow, as if he unaware  
Had struck some quay or bridge-foot  
stair!

That I may throw a paper out  
As you and he go underneath.

There's Zanze's vigilant taper; safe are  
we.

Only one minute more to-night with me?  
Resume your past self of a month ago!  
Be you the bashful gallant, I will be  
The lady with the colder breast than snow.  
Now bow you, as becomes, nor touch my  
hand

More than I touch yours when I step to  
land,

And say, "All thanks, Siora!" —

Heart to heart  
And lips to lips! Yet once more, ere we  
part,

Clasp me and make me thine, as mine  
thou art!

*[He is surprised, and stabbed.]*

It was ordained to be so, sweet! — and  
best

Comes now beneath thine eyes, upon thy  
breast.

Still kiss me! Care not for the cowards!  
Care

Only to put aside thy beauteous hair  
My blood will hurt! The Three, I do not  
scorn

To death, because they never lived: but I  
Have lived indeed, and so -- (yet one  
more kiss) — can die! 1842.

## THE PIED PIPER OF HAMELIN

### A CHILD'S STORY

*(Written for, and inscribed to, W. M. the  
Younger.)*<sup>1</sup>

#### I

HAMELIN Town's in Brunswick,  
By famous Hanover city;  
The river Weser, deep and wide,  
Washes its wall on the southern side  
A pleasanter spot you never spied;

<sup>1</sup> The son of William Macready, the famous actor.

But, when begins my ditty,  
Almost five hundred years ago,  
To see the townsfolk suffer so  
From vermin, was a pity.

#### II

Rats!  
They fought the dogs and killed the cats,  
And bit the babies in the cradles,  
And ate the cheeses out of the vats,  
And licked the soup from the cooks'  
own ladles,  
Split open the kegs of salted sprats,  
Made nests inside men's Sunday hats,  
And even spoiled the women's chats  
By drowning their speaking  
With shrieking and squeaking  
In fifty different sharps and flats.

#### III

At last the people in a body  
To the Town Hall came flocking:  
"Tis clear," cried they, "our Mayor's  
a noddy;  
And as for our Corporation — shocking  
To think we buy gowns lined with ermine  
For dolts that can't or won't determine  
What's best to rid us of our vermin!  
You hope, because you're old and obese,  
To find in the furry civic robe ease?  
Rouse up, sirs! Give your brains a rack-  
ing  
To find the remedy we're lacking,  
Or, sure as fate, we'll send you pack-  
ing!"  
At this the Mayor and Corporation  
Quaked with a mighty consternation.

#### IV

An hour they sat in council;  
At length the Mayor broke silence:  
"For a guilder I'd my ermine gown  
sell,  
I wish I were a mile hence!  
It's easy to bid one rack one's brain —  
I'm sure my poor head aches again,  
I've scratched it so, and all in vain.  
Oh for a trap, a trap, a trap!"  
Just as he said this, what should hap  
At the chamber-door but a gentle tap?  
"Bless us," cried the Mayor, "what's  
that?"  
(With the Corporation as he sat,  
Looking little though wondrous fat;  
Nor brighter was his eye, nor moister  
Than a too-long-opened oyster,

Save when at noon his paunch grew  
 mutinous  
 For a plate of turtle green and glutinous)  
 "Only a scraping of shoes on the mat?  
 Anything like the sound of a rat  
 Makes my heart go pit-a-pat!"

## V

"Come in!" — the Mayor cried, looking  
 bigger:  
 And in did come the strangest figure!  
 His queer long coat from heel to head  
 Was half of yellow and half of red,  
 And he himself was tall and thin,  
 With sharp blue eyes, each like a pin,  
 And light loose hair, yet swarthy skin,  
 No tuft on cheek nor beard on chin,  
 But lips where smiles went out and in;  
 There was no guessing his kith and kin:  
 And nobody could enough admire  
 The tall man and his quaint attire.  
 Quoth one: "It's as my great-grand-  
 sire,  
 Starting up at the Trump of Doom's tone,  
 Had walked this way from his painted  
 tombstone!"

## VI

He advanced to the council-table:  
 And, "Please your honors," said he,  
 "I'm able,  
 By means of a secret charm, to draw  
 All creatures living beneath the sun,  
 That creep or swim or fly or run,  
 After me so as you never saw!  
 And I chiefly use my charm  
 On creatures that do people harm,  
 The mole and toad and newt and viper;  
 And people call me the Pied Piper."  
 (And here they noticed round his neck  
 A scarf of red and yellow stripe,  
 To match with his coat of the self-same  
 check;  
 And at the scarf's end hung a pipe;  
 And his fingers, they noticed, were ever  
 straying  
 As if impatient to be playing  
 Upon this pipe, as low it dangled  
 Over his vesture so old-fangled.)  
 "Yet," said he, "poor piper as I am,  
 In Tartary I freed the Cham,  
 Last June, from his huge swarms of  
 gnats;  
 I eased in Asia the Nizam  
 Of a monstrous brood of vampire-bats:

And as for what your brain bewilders,  
 If I can rid your town of rats  
 Will you give me a thousand guilders?"  
 "One? fifty thousand!" — was the ex-  
 clamation  
 Of the astonished Mayor and Corpora-  
 tion.

## VII

Into the street the Piper stepped,  
 Smiling first a little smile,  
 As if he knew what magic slept  
 In his quiet pipe the while;  
 Then, like a musical adept,  
 To blow the pipe his lips he wrinkled,  
 And green and blue his sharp eyes  
 twinkled,  
 Like a candle-flame where salt is  
 sprinkled;  
 And ere three shrill notes the pipe uttered,  
 You heard as if an army muttered;  
 And the muttering grew to a grumbling;  
 And the grumbling grew to a mighty  
 rumbling;  
 And out of the houses the rats came  
 tumbling.  
 Great rats, small rats, lean rats, brawny  
 rats,  
 Brown rats, black rats, gray rats, tawny  
 rats,  
 Grave old plodders, gay young friskers,  
 Fathers, mothers, uncles, cousins,  
 Cocking tails and pricking whiskers,  
 Families by tens and dozens,  
 Brothers, sisters, husbands, wives —  
 Followed the Piper for their lives.  
 From street to street he piped advancing,  
 And step for step they followed dancing,  
 Until they came to the river Weser,  
 Wherein all plunged and perished!  
 — Save one who, stout as Julius Cæsar,  
 Swam across and lived to carry  
 (As he, the manuscript he cherished)  
 To Rat-land home his commentary:  
 Which was, "At the first shrill notes of the  
 pipe,  
 I heard a sound as of scraping tripe,  
 And putting apples, wondrous ripe,  
 Into a cider-press's gripe:  
 And a moving away of pickle-tub-boards,  
 And a leaving ajar of conserve-cup-  
 boards,  
 And a drawing the corks of train-oil-  
 flasks,  
 And a breaking the hoops of butter-  
 casks:

And it seemed as if a voice  
(Sweeter far than by harp or by psaltery  
Is breathed) called out, 'Oh rats, rejoice!  
The world is grown to one vast dry-  
saltery!

So munch on, crunch on, take your  
nuncheon,

Breakfast, supper, dinner, luncheon!  
And just as a bulky sugar puncheon,  
All ready staved, like a great sun shone  
Glorious scarce an inch before me,  
Just as methought it said, 'Come, bore  
me!'

— I found the Weser rolling o'er me."

## VIII

You should have heard the Hamelin  
people

Ring the bells till they rocked the  
steeple.

"Go," cried the Mayor, "and get long  
poles,

Poke out the nests and block up the  
holes!

Consult with carpenters and builders,  
And leave in our town not even a trace  
Of the rats!" — when suddenly, up the  
face

Of the Piper perked in the market-place,  
With a, "First, if you please, my thou-  
sand guilders!"

## IX

A thousand guilders! The Mayor looked  
blue;

So did the Corporation too.

For council dinners made rare havoc

With Claret, Moselle, Vin-de-Grave,  
Hock;

And half the money would replenish

Their cellar's biggest butt with Rhenish.

To pay this sum to a wandering fellow

With a gypsy coat of red and yellow!

"Beside," quoth the Mayor with a  
knowing wink,

"Our business was done at the river's  
brink;

We saw with our eyes the vermin sink,

And what's dead can't come to life, I  
think.

So, friend, we're not the folks to shrink

From the duty of giving you something  
for drink,

And a matter of money to put in your  
poke;

But as for the guilders, what we spoke  
Of them, as you very well know, was in  
joke.

Beside, our losses have made us thrifty.  
A thousand guilders. Come, take fifty!"

## X

The Piper's face fell, and he cried,

"No trifling! I can't wait, beside!

I've promised to visit by dinner time

Bagdad, and accept the prime

Of the Head-Cook's pottage, all he's  
rich in,

For having left, in the Caliph's kitchen,  
Of a nest of scorpions no survivor:

With him I proved no bargain-driver,

With you, don't think I'll bate a stiver!

And folks who put me in a passion  
May find me pipe after another fashion."

## XI

"How?" cried the Mayor, "d'ye think  
I brook

Being worse treated than a Cook?

Insulted by a lazy ribald

With idle pipe and vesture piebald?

You threaten us, fellow? Do your worst.  
Blow your pipe there till you burst!"

## XII

Once more he stepped into the street,

And to his lips again

Laid his long pipe of smooth straight  
cane;

And ere he blew three notes (such sweet  
Soft notes as yet musician's cunning

Never gave the enraptured air)

There was a rustling that seemed like a  
bustling

Of merry crowds justling at pitching and  
hustling;

Small feet were pattering, wooden shoes  
clattering,

Little hands clapping and little tongues  
chattering,

And, like fowls in a farm-yard when  
barley is scattering,

Out came the children running.

All the little boys and girls,

With rosy cheeks and flaxen curls,

And sparkling eyes and teeth like pearls,

Tripping and skipping, ran merrily after

The wonderful music with shouting and  
laughter.



## XIII

The Mayor was dumb, and the Council  
stood  
As if they were changed into blocks of  
wood,

Unable to move a step, or cry  
To the children merrily skipping by,  
— Could only follow with the eye  
That joyous crowd at the Piper's back.  
But how the Mayor was on the rack,  
And the wretched Council's bosoms beat,  
As the Piper turned from the High  
Street

To where the Weser rolled its waters  
Right in the way of their sons and  
daughters!

However, he turned from South to West,  
And to Koppelberg Hill his steps ad-  
dressed,

And after him the children pressed;  
Great was the joy in every breast.  
"He never can cross that mighty top!  
He's forced to let the piping drop,  
And we shall see our children stop!"

When, lo, as they reached the mountain-  
side,

A wondrous portal opened wide.  
As if a cavern was suddenly hollowed;  
And the Piper advanced and the children  
followed,

And when all were in to the very last,  
The door in the mountain-side shut  
fast.

Did I say all? No! One was lame,  
And could not dance the whole of the  
way;

And in after years if you would blame  
His sadness, he was used to say, —  
"It's dull in our town since my playmates  
left!

I can't forget that I'm bereft  
Of all the pleasant sights they see,  
Which the Piper also promised me.  
For he led us, he said, to a joyous land,  
Joining the town and just at hand,  
Where waters gushed and fruit-trees grew  
And flowers put forth a fairer hue,  
And everything was strange and new;  
The sparrows were brighter than peacocks  
here,

And their dogs outran our fallow deer.  
And honey-bees had lost their stings,  
And horses were born with eagles' wings;  
And just as I became assured  
My lame foot would be speedily cured,

The music stopped and I stood still,  
And found myself outside the hill,  
Left alone against my will,  
To go now limping as before,  
And never hear of that country more!"

## XIV

Alas, alas for Hamelin!

There came into many a burgher's pate  
A text which says that heaven's gate  
Opes to the rich at as easy rate

As the needle's eye takes a camel in!  
The Mayor sent East, West, North and  
South,

To offer the Piper, by word of mouth,  
Wherever it was men's lot to find  
him,

Silver and gold to his heart's content,  
If he'd only return the way he went,

And bring the children behind him.  
But when they saw 'twas a lost endeavor,  
And Piper and dancers were gone for-  
ever,

They made a decree that lawyers never  
Should think their records dated duly  
If, after the day of the month and year,  
These words did not as well appear,

"And so long after what happened here  
On the Twenty-second of July,  
Thirteen hundred and seventy-six:"

And the better in memory to fix  
The place of the children's last retreat,  
They called it, the Pied Piper's Street —  
Where any one playing on pipe or tabor  
Was sure for the future to lose his labor.  
Nor suffered they hostelry or tavern

To shock with mirth a street so solemn;  
But opposite the place of the cavern

They wrote the story on a column.  
And on the great church-window painted  
The same, to make the world acquainted  
How their children were stolen away,  
And there it stands to this very day.

And I must not omit to say  
That in Transylvania there's a tribe  
Of alien people who ascribe  
The outlandish ways and dress  
On which their neighbors lay such stress,  
To their fathers and mothers having  
risen

Out of some subterraneous prison  
To which they were trepanned  
Long time ago in a mighty band  
Out of Hamelin town in Brunswick land,  
But how or why, they don't understand.

## xv

So, Willy, let me and you be wipers  
 Of scores out with all men — especially  
     pipers!  
 And, whether they pipe us free from rats  
     or from mice,  
 If we've promised them aught, let us  
     keep our promise! 1842.

## RUDEL TO THE LADY OF TRIPOLI

I KNOW a Mount, the gracious Sun per-  
     ceives  
 First, when he visits, last, too, when he  
     leaves  
 The world; and, vainly favored, it repays  
 The day-long glory of his steadfast gaze  
 By no change of its large calm front of  
     snow.  
 And underneath the Mount, a Flower I  
     know,  
 He cannot have perceived, that changes  
     ever  
 At his approach; and, in the lost en-  
     deavor  
 To live his life, has parted, one by one,  
 With all a flower's true graces, for the  
     grace  
 Of being but a foolish mimic sun,  
 With ray-like florets round a disk-like  
     face.  
 Men nobly call by many a name the  
     Mount  
 As over many a land of theirs its large  
 Calm front of snow like a triumphal  
     targe  
 Is reared, and still with old names, fresh  
     names vie,  
 Each to its proper praise and own ac-  
     count:  
 Men call the Flower the Sunflower,  
     sportively.

## II

Oh, Angel of the East, one, one gold look  
 Across the waters to this twilight nook,  
 — The far sad waters, Angel, to this  
     nook!

## III

Dear Pilgrim, art thou for the East in-  
     deed?  
 Go! — saying ever as thou dost proceed,

That I, French Rudel, choose for my  
     device  
 A sunflower outspread like a sacrifice  
 Before its idol. See! These inexpert  
 And hurried fingers could not fail to hurt  
 The woven picture; 'tis a woman's skill  
 Indeed; but nothing baffled me, so, ill  
 Or well, the work is finished. Say, men  
     feed  
 On songs I sing, and therefore bask the  
     bees  
 On my flower's breast as on a platform  
     broad:  
 But as the flower's concern is not for  
     these  
 But solely for the sun, so men applaud  
 In vain this Rudel, he not looking here  
 But to the East — the East! Go, say  
     this, Pilgrim dear! 1842.

THERE'S A WOMAN LIKE A DEW-  
DROP

## FROM A BLOT IN THE SCUTCHEON

THERE'S a woman like a dewdrop, she's  
     so purer than the purest;  
 And her noble heart's the noblest, yes,  
     and her sure faith's the surest:  
 And her eyes are dark and humid, like  
     the depth on depth of lustre  
 Hid i' the harebell, while her tresses, sun-  
     nier than the wild-grape cluster,  
 Gush in golden-tinted plenty down her  
     neck's rose-misted marble:  
 Then her voice's music . . . call it the  
     well's bubbling, the bird's warble!  
 And this woman says, "My days were  
     sunless and my nights were moon-  
     less,  
 Parched the pleasant April herbage, and  
     the lark's heart's outbreak tune-  
     less,  
 If you loved me not!" And I who —  
     (ah, for words of flame!) adore  
     her,  
 Who am mad to lay my spirit prostrate  
     palpably before her —  
 I may enter at her portal soon, as now  
     her lattice takes me,  
 And by noontide as by midnight make  
     her mine, as hers she makes  
     me!

1843.

THE LOST LEADER<sup>1</sup>

JUST for a handful of silver he left us,  
 Just for a riband to stick in his coat —  
 Found the one gift of which fortune be-  
 reft us,  
 Lost all the others she lets us devote;  
 They, with the gold to give, doled him  
 out silver,  
 So much was theirs who so little al-  
 lowed:  
 How all our copper had gone for his  
 service!  
 Rags — were they purple, his heart had  
 been proud!  
 We that had loved him so, followed him,  
 honored him,  
 Lived in his mild and magnificent  
 eye,  
 Learned his great language, caught his  
 clear accents,  
 Made him our pattern to live and to  
 die!  
 Shakespeare was of us, Milton was for  
 us,  
 Burns, Shelley, were with us, — they  
 watch from their graves!

<sup>1</sup> Browning admitted that in writing this poem he had Wordsworth in mind, but insisted that he did not mean it as an exact portrait of Wordsworth. Browning's mature judgment on the matter is best expressed in his own words: "I *did* in my hasty youth presume to use the great and venerated personality of Wordsworth as a sort of painter's model; one from which this or the other particular feature may be selected and turned to account; but I intended more, above all, such a boldness as por-  
traying the entire man, I should not have talked about 'handfuls of silver and bits of ribbon.' These never influenced the change of politics in the great poet, whose defection, nevertheless, accompanied as it was by a regular face-about of his special party, was to my juvenile apprehension, and even mature consideration, an event to deplore." See also Mrs. Orr's *Browning (Life and Letters)*, I, 191. Compare Shelley's early Sonnet

## TO WORDSWORTH

POET of Nature, thou hast wept to know  
 That things depart which never may return:  
 Childhood and youth, friendship and love's first  
 glow,  
 Have fled like sweet dreams, leaving thee to mourn.  
 These common woes I feel. One loss is mine  
 Which thou too feel'st, yet I alone deplore.  
 Thou wert as a lone star, whose light did shine  
 On some frail bark in winter's midnight roar:  
 Thou hast like to a rock-built refuge stood  
 Above the blind and battling multitude:  
 In honored poverty thy voice did weave  
 Songs consecrate to truth and liberty, —  
 Deserting these, thou leavest me to grieve,  
 Thus having been, that thou shouldst cease to be.

1815. 1816.

He alone breaks from the van and the  
 freemen,  
 — He alone sinks to the rear and the  
 slaves!

We shall march prospering, — not  
 through his presence;  
 Songs may inspirit us, — not from his  
 lyre;  
 Deeds will be done, — while he boasts his  
 quiescence,  
 Still bidding crouch whom the rest  
 bade aspire:  
 Blot out his name, then, record one lost  
 soul more,  
 One task more declined, one more  
 footpath untrod,  
 One more devils'-triumph and sorrow for  
 angels,  
 One wrong more to man, one more in-  
 sult to God!  
 Life's night begins: let him never come  
 back to us!  
 There would be doubt, hesitation and  
 pain,  
 Forced praise on our part — the glimmer  
 of twilight,  
 Never glad confident morning again!  
 Best fight on well, for we taught him —  
 strike gallantly,  
 Menace our heart ere we master his  
 own;  
 Then let him receive the new knowledge  
 and wait us,  
 Pardoned in heaven, the first by the  
 throne! 1845.

HOW THEY BROUGHT THE GOOD  
NEWS FROM GHENT TO AIX<sup>1</sup>

I SPRANG to the stirrup, and Joris, and  
 he;  
 I galloped, Dirck galloped, we galloped  
 all three;  
 "Good speed!" cried the watch, as the  
 gatebolts undrew;  
 "Speed!" echoed the wall to us gallop-  
 ing through;  
 Behind shut the postern, the lights sank  
 to rest,  
 And into the midnight we galloped  
 abreast.

<sup>1</sup> This galloping ballad, which has no historical foundation, was written at sea, off Cape St. Vincent. See Mrs. Orr's *Browning*, I, 144-45.

Not a word to each other; we kept the  
great pace

Neck by neck, stride by stride, never  
changing our place;

I turned in my saddle and made its girths  
tight,

Then shortened each stirrup, and set the  
pique right,

Rebuckled the cheek-strap, chained  
slacker the bit,

Nor galloped less steadily Roland a whit.

'Twas moonset at starting; but while  
we drew near

Lokeren, the cocks crew and twilight  
dawned clear;

At Boom, a great yellow star came out  
to see;

At Duffeld, 'twas morning as plain as  
could be;

And from Mecheln church-steeple we  
heard the half-chime,

So Joris broke silence with, "Yet there  
is time!"

At Aershot, up leaped of a sudden the sun,  
And against him the cattle stood black  
every one,

To stare through the mist at us galloping  
past,

And I saw my stout galloper Roland at last,  
With resolute shoulders, each butting away  
The haze, as some bluff river headland its  
spray:

And his low head and crest, just one sharp  
ear bent back

For my voice, and the other pricked out  
on his track;

And one eye's black intelligence, — ever  
that glance

O'er its white edge at me, his own master,  
askance!

And the thick heavy spume-flakes which  
aye and anon

His fierce lips shook upwards in galloping  
on.

By Hasselt, Dirck groaned; and cried  
Joris, "Stay spur!

Your Roos galloped bravely, the fault's  
not in her.

We'll remember at Aix" — for one heard  
the quick wheeze

Of her chest, saw the stretched neck and  
staggering knees,

And sunk tail, and horrible heave of the  
flank,

As down on her haunches she shuddered  
and sank.

So, we were left galloping, Joris and I,  
Past Looz and past Tongres, no cloud in  
the sky;

The broad sun above laughed a pitiless  
laugh,

'Neath our feet broke the brittle bright  
stubble like chaff;

Till over by Dalhem a dome-spire sprang  
white,

And "Gallop," gasped Joris, "for Aix is  
in sight!"

"How they'll greet us!" — and all in a  
moment his roan

Rolled neck and croup over, lay dead as a  
stone;

And there was my Roland to bear the  
whole weight

Of the news which alone could save Aix  
from her fate,

With his nostrils like pits full of blood to  
the brim,

And with circles of red for his eye-sockets'  
rim.

Then I cast loose my buffcoat, each hol-  
ster let fall,

Shook off both my jack-boots, let go belt  
and all,

Stood up in the stirrup, leaned, patted  
his ear,

Called my Roland his pet-name, my horse  
without peer;

Clapped my hands, laughed and sang, any  
noise, bad or good,

Till at length into Aix Roland galloped  
and stood.

And all I remember is — friends flocking  
round

As I sat with his head 'twixt my knees  
on the ground;

And no voice but was praising this Roland  
of mine,

As I poured down his throat our last  
measure of wine,

Which (the burghesses voted by common  
consent)

Was no more than his due who brought  
good news from Ghent.

## EARTH'S IMMORTALITIES

## FAME

SEE, as the prettiest graves will do in time,  
 Our poet's wants the freshness of its prime;  
 Spite of the sexton's browsing horse, the  
   sods  
 Have struggled through its binding osier  
   rods;  
 Headstone and half-sunk footstone lean  
   awry,  
 Wanting the brick-work promised by-  
   and-by;  
 How the minute gray lichens, plate o'er  
   plate,  
 Have softened down the crisp-cut name  
   and date!

## LOVE

So, the year's done with!  
 (*Love me forever!*)  
 All March begun with,  
 April's endeavor;  
 May-wreaths that bound me  
   June needs must sever;  
 Now snows fall round me,  
 Quenching June's fever —  
 (*Love me forever!*) 1845.

## MEETING AT NIGHT

THE gray sea and the long black land;  
 And the yellow half-moon large and low;  
 And the startled little waves that leap  
 In fiery ringlets from their sleep,  
 As I gain the cove with pushing prow,  
 And quench its speed i' the slushy sand.

Then a mile of warm sea-scented beach;  
 Three fields to cross till a farm appears;  
 A tap at the pane, the quick sharp scratch  
 And blue spurt of a lighted match,  
 And a voice less loud, through its joys  
   and fears,  
 Than the two hearts beating each to each!  
 1845.

## PARTING AT MORNING

ROUND the cape of a sudden came the sea,  
 And the sun looked over the mountain's  
   rim:  
 And straight was a path of gold for him,  
 And the need of a world of men for me.  
 1845.

## SONG

NAY but you, who do not love her,  
   Is she not pure gold, my mistress?  
 Holds earth aught — speak truth —  
   above her?  
 Aught like this tress, see, and this tress,  
 And this last fairest tress of all,  
 So fair, see, ere I let it fall?  
 Because you spend your lives in praising;  
   To praise, you search the wide world  
   over:  
 Then why not witness, calmly gazing,  
   If earth holds aught — speak truth —  
   above her?  
 Above this tress, and this, I touch  
 But cannot praise, I love so much!  
 1845.

## HOME-THOUGHTS, FROM ABROAD

OH, to be in England  
 Now that April's there,  
 And whoever wakes in England  
 Sees, some morning, unaware,  
 That the lowest boughs and the brush-  
   wood sheaf  
 Round the elm-tree bole are in tiny leaf,  
 While the chaffinch sings on the orchard  
   bough  
 In England — now!

And after April, when May follows,  
 And the whitethroat builds, and all the  
   swallows!  
 Hark, where my blossomed pear-tree in  
   the hedge  
 Leans to the field and scatters on the  
   clover  
 Blossoms and dewdrops — at the bent  
   spray's edge —  
 That's the wise thrush; he sings each  
   song twice over,  
 Lest you should think he never could re-  
   capture  
 The first fine careless rapture!  
 And though the fields look rough with  
   hoary dew,  
 All will be gay when noontide wakes  
   anew  
 The buttercups, the little children's  
   dower  
 — Far brighter than this gaudy melon  
   flower!  
 1845.



## HOME-THOUGHTS, FROM THE SEA

NOBLY, nobly Cape Saint Vincent to the  
 Northwest died away;  
 Sunset ran, one glorious blood-red, reek-  
 ing into Cadiz Bay;  
 Bluish 'mid the burning water, full in  
 face Trafalgar lay;  
 In the dimmest Northeast distance  
 dawned Gibraltar grand and gray;  
 "Here and here did England help me:  
 how can I help England?" — say,

Whoso turns as I, this evening, turn to  
 God to praise and pray,  
 While Jove's planet rises yonder, silent  
 over Africa.

1838. 1845.

## TIME'S REVENGES

I've a Friend, over the sea;  
 I like him, but he loves me.  
 It all grew out of the books I write;  
 They find such favor in his sight  
 That he slaughters you with savage looks  
 Because you don't admire my books.  
 He does himself though, — and if some  
 vein

Were to snap to-night in this heavy brain,  
 To-morrow month, if I lived to try,  
 Round should I just turn quietly,  
 Or out of the bedclothes stretch my hand  
 Till I found him, come from his foreign  
 land

To be my nurse in this poor place,  
 And make my broth and wash my face  
 And light my fire and, all the while,  
 Bear with his old good-humored smile  
 That I told him "Better have kept away  
 Than come and kill me, night and day,  
 With, worse than fever throbs and shoots,  
 The creaking of his clumsy boots."  
 I am as sure that this he would do,  
 As that Saint Paul's is striking two.  
 And I think I rather . . . woe is me!

— Yes, rather should see him than not  
 see,

If lifting a hand could seat him there  
 Before me in the empty chair  
 To-night, when my head aches indeed,  
 And I can neither think nor read,  
 Nor make these purple fingers hold  
 The pen; this garret's freezing cold!

And I've a Lady — there he wakes,  
 The laughing fiend and prince of snakes  
 Within me, at her name, to pray  
 Fate send some creature in the way  
 Of my love for her, to be down-torn,  
 Upthrust and outward-borne.  
 So I might prove myself that sea  
 Of passion which I needs must be!  
 Call my thoughts false and my fancies  
 quaint

And my style infirm and its figures faint,  
 All the critics say and more blame yet,  
 And not one angry word you get.  
 But, please you, wonder I would put  
 My cheek beneath that lady's foot  
 Rather than trample under mine  
 The laurels of the Florentine,  
 And you shall see how the devil spends  
 A fire God gave for other ends!  
 I tell you, I ride up and down  
 This garret, crowned with love's best  
 crown,

And feasted with love's perfect feast,  
 To think I kill for her, at least,  
 Body and soul and peace and fame,  
 Alike youth's end and manhood's aim,  
 — So is my spirit, as flesh with sin,  
 Filled full, eaten out and in  
 With the face of her, the eyes of her,  
 The lips, the little chin, the stir  
 Of shadow round her mouth; and she  
 — I'll tell you — calmly would decree  
 That I should roast at a slow fire,  
 If that would compass her desire  
 And make her one whom they invite  
 To the famous ball to-morrow night.

There may be heaven; there must be hell;  
 Meantime, there is our earth here — well!  
 1845.

## THE ITALIAN IN ENGLAND

THAT second time they hunted me  
 From hill to plain, from shore to sea,  
 And Austria, hounding far and wide  
 Her blood-hounds through the country-  
 side,  
 Breathed hot and instant on my trace, —  
 I made six days a hiding-place  
 Of that dry green old aqueduct  
 Where I and Charles, when boys, have  
 plucked  
 The fire-flies from the roof above,  
 Bright creeping through the moss they  
 love:

—How long it seems since Charles was lost!

Six days the soldiers crossed and crossed  
The country in my very sight;  
And when that peril ceased at night,  
The sky broke out in red dismay  
With signal fires; well, there I lay  
Close covered o'er in my recess,  
Up to the neck in ferns and cress,  
Thinking on Metternich our friend,  
And Charles's miserable end,  
And much beside, two days; the third,  
Hunger o'ercame me when I heard  
The peasants from the village go  
To work among the maize; you know,  
With us in Lombardy, they bring  
Provisions packed on mules, a string  
With little bells that cheer their task,  
And casks, and boughs on every cask  
To keep the sun's heat from the wine;  
These I let pass in jingling line,  
And, close on them, dear noisy crew,  
The peasants from the village, too;  
For at the very rear would troop  
Their wives and sisters in a group  
To help, I knew. When these had  
passed,

I threw my glove to strike the last  
Taking the chance: she did not start,  
Much less cry out, but stooped apart,  
One instant rapidly glanced round,  
And saw me beckon from the ground;  
A wild bush grows and hides my crypt:  
She picked my glove up while she stripped  
A branch off, then rejoined the rest  
With that; my glove lay in her breast.  
Then I drew breath: they disappeared:  
It was for Italy I feared.

An hour, and she returned alone  
Exactly where my glove was thrown.  
Meanwhile came many thoughts; on me  
Rested the hopes of Italy;  
I had devised a certain tale  
Which, when 'twas told her, could not  
fail

Persuade a peasant of its truth;  
I meant to call a freak of youth  
This hiding, and give hopes of pay,  
And no temptation to betray.  
But when I saw that woman's face,  
Its calm simplicity of grace,  
Our Italy's own attitude  
In which she walked thus far, and stood,  
Planting each naked foot so firm,  
To crush the snake and spare the worm —

At first sight of her eyes, I said,  
"I am that man upon whose head  
They fix the price, because I hate  
The Austrians over us: the State  
Will give you gold — oh, gold so much! —  
If you betray me to their clutch,  
And be your death, for aught I know,  
If once they find you saved their foe.  
Now, you must bring me food and  
drink,

And also paper, pen and ink,  
And carry safe what I shall write  
To Padua, which you'll reach at night  
Before the duomo shuts; go in,  
And wait till Tenebræ begin;  
Walk to the third confessional,  
Between the pillar and the wall,  
And kneeling whisper, *Whence comes  
peace?*

Say it a second time, then cease;  
And if the voice inside returns,  
*From Christ and Freedom; what concerns  
The cause of Peace?* — for answer, slip  
My letter where you placed your lip;  
Then come back happy we have done  
Our mother service — I, the son,  
As you the daughter of our land!"

Three mornings more, she took her  
stand  
In the same place, with the same eyes:  
I was no surer of sunrise  
Than of her coming. We conferred  
Of her own prospects, and I heard  
She had a lover — stout and tall,  
She said — then let her eyelids fall,  
"He could do much" — as if some doubt  
Entered her heart, — then, passing out,  
"She could not speak for others, who  
Had other thoughts; herself she knew:"  
And so she brought me drink and food.  
After four days, the scouts pursued  
Another path; at last arrived  
The help my Paduan friends contrived  
To furnish me: she brought the news.  
For the first time I could not choose  
But kiss her hand, and lay my own  
Upon her head — "This faith was shown  
To Italy, our mother; she  
Uses my hand and blesses thee."  
She followed down to the sea-shore;  
I left and never saw her more.

How very long since I have thought  
Concerning — much less wished for —  
aught

Beside the good of Italy,  
 For which I live and mean to die!  
 I never was in love; and since  
 Charles proved false, what shall now  
     convince

My inmost heart I have a friend?  
 However, if I pleased to spend  
 Real wishes on myself — say, three —  
 I know at least what one should be.  
 I would grasp Metternich until  
 I felt his red wet throat distil  
 In blood through these two hands. And  
     next

— Nor much for that am I perplexed —  
 Charles, perjured traitor, for his part,  
 Should die slow of a broken heart  
 Under his new employers. Last  
 — Ah, there, what should I wish? For  
     fast

Do I grow old and out of strength.  
 If I resolved to seek at length  
 My father's house again, how scared  
 They all would look, and unprepared!  
 My brothers live in Austria's pay  
 — Disowned me long ago, men say;  
 And all my early mates who used  
 To praise me so — perhaps induced  
 More than one early step of mine —  
 Are turning wise: while some opine  
 "Freedom grows license," some suspect  
 "Haste breeds delay," and recollect  
 They always said, such premature  
 Beginnings never could endure!  
 So, with a sullen "All's for best,"  
 The land seems settling to its rest.  
 I think then, I should wish to stand  
 This evening in that dear, lost land,  
 Over the sea the thousand miles,  
 And know if yet that woman smiles  
 With the calm smile; some little farm  
 She lives in there, no doubt: what  
     harm

If I sat on the door-side bench,  
 And, while her spindle made a trench  
 Fantastically in the dust,  
 Inquired of all her fortunes — just  
 Her children's ages and their names,  
 And what may be the husband's aims  
 For each of them. I'd talk this out,  
 And sit there, for an hour about,  
 Then kiss her hand once more, and lay  
 Mine on her head, and go my way.

So much for idle wishing — how  
 It steals the time! To business now.

1845.

# PICTOR IGNOTUS

FLORENCE, 15—

I COULD have painted pictures like that  
     youth's

Ye praise so. How my soul springs up!  
     No bar

Stayed me — ah, thought which saddens  
     while it soothes!

— Never did fate forbid me, star by  
     star,

To outburst on your night with all my  
     gift

Of fires from God: nor would my flesh  
     have shrunk

From seconding my soul, with eyes uplift  
 And wide to heaven, or, straight like  
     thunder, sunk

To the centre, of an instant; or around  
 Turned calmly and inquisitive, to scan  
 The license and the limit, space and  
     bound,

Allowed to truth made visible in man.  
 And, like that youth ye praise so, all I saw,  
 Over the canvas could my hand have  
     flung,

Each face obedient to its passion's law,  
 Each passion clear proclaimed without  
     a tongue;

Whether Hope rose at once in all the  
     blood,

A-tiptoe for the blessing of embrace,  
 Or Rapture drooped the eyes, as when  
     her brood

Pull down the nesting dove's heart to  
     its place;

Or Confidence lit swift the forehead up,  
 And locked the mouth fast, like a  
     castle braved, —

O human faces, hath it spilt, my cup?  
 What did ye give me that I have not  
     saved?

Nor will I say I have not dreamed (how  
     well!)

Of going — I, in each new picture, —  
     forth,

As, making new hearts beat and bosoms  
     swell,

To Pope or Kaiser, East, West, South,  
     or North,

Bound for the calmly satisfied great State,  
 Or glad aspiring little burgh, it went,  
 Flowers cast upon the car which bore the  
     freight,

Through old streets named afresh from  
     the event,

Till it reached home, where learned age  
 should greet  
 My face, and youth, the star not yet  
 distinct  
 Above his hair, lie learning at my feet! —  
 Oh, thus to live, I and my picture,  
 linked  
 With love about, and praise, till life  
 should end,  
 And then not go to heaven, but linger  
 here,  
 Here on my earth, earth's every man my  
 friend, —  
 The thought grew frightful, 'twas so  
 wildly dear!  
 But a voice changed it. Glimpses of  
 such sights  
 Have scared me, like the revels through  
 a door  
 Of some strange house of idols at its rites!  
 This world seemed not the world it  
 was before:  
 Mixed with my loving trusting ones,  
 there trooped  
 . . . Who summoned those cold faces  
 that begun  
 To press on me and judge me? Though  
 I stooped  
 Shrinking, as from the soldiery a nun,  
 They drew me forth, and spite of me . . .  
 enough!  
 These buy and sell our pictures, take  
 and give,  
 Count them for garniture and household-  
 stuff  
 And where they live needs must our  
 pictures live  
 And see their faces, listen to their prate,  
 Partakers of their daily pettiness,  
 Discussed of, — "This I love, or this I  
 hate,  
 This likes me more, and this affects  
 me less!"  
 Wherefore I chose my portion. If at  
 whiles  
 My heart sinks, as monotonous I paint  
 These endless cloisters and eternal aisles  
 With the same series, Virgin, Babe  
 and Saint,  
 With the same cold calm beautiful  
 regard, —  
 At least no merchant traffics in my  
 heart;  
 The sanctuary's gloom at least shall ward  
 Vain tongues from where my pictures  
 stand apart:

Only prayer breaks the silence of the  
 shrine  
 While, blackening in the daily candle-  
 smoke,  
 They moulder on the damp wall's traver-  
 tine,  
 'Mid echoes the light footstep never  
 woke.  
 So, die my pictures! surely, gently die!  
 O youth, men praise so, — holds their  
 praise its worth?  
 Blown harshly, keeps the trump its  
 golden cry?  
 Tastes sweet the water with such specks  
 of earth?  
 1845.

### THE BISHOP ORDERS HIS TOMB AT SAINT PRAXED'S CHURCH

ROME, 15—

VANITY, saith the preacher, vanity!  
 Draw round my bed: is Anselm keeping  
 back?  
 Nephews — sons mine . . . ah God, I  
 know not! Well —  
 She, men would have to be your mother  
 once,  
 Old Gandolf envied me, so fair she was!  
 What's done is done, and she is dead  
 beside,  
 Dead long ago, and I am Bishop since,  
 And as she died so must we die our-  
 selves,  
 And thence ye may perceive the world's  
 a dream.  
 Life, how and what is it? As here I lie  
 In this state-chamber, dying by degrees,  
 Hours and long hours in the dead night,  
 I ask  
 "Do I live, am I dead?" Peace, peace  
 seems all.  
 Saint Praxed's ever was the church for  
 peace;  
 And so, about this tomb of mine. I  
 fought  
 With tooth and nail to save my niche,  
 ye know:  
 — Old Gandolf cozened me, despite my  
 care;  
 Shrewd was that snatch from out the  
 corner South  
 He graced his carrion with, God curse the  
 same!  
 Yet still my niche is not so cramped but  
 thence



One sees the pulpit o' the epistle-side,  
 And somewhat of the choir, those silent  
   seats,  
 And up into the very doom where live  
 The angels, and a sunbeam's sure to lurk :  
 And I shall fill my slab of basalt there,  
 And 'neath my tabernacle take my rest,  
 With those nine columns round me, two  
   and two,  
 The odd one at my feet where Anselm  
   stands :  
 Peach-blossom marble all, the rare, the  
   ripe  
 As fresh-poured red wine of a mighty  
   pulse.  
 — Old Gandolf with his paltry onion-  
   stone,  
 Put me where I may look at him ! True  
   peach,  
 Rosy and flawless : how I earned the  
   prize !  
 Draw close : that conflagration of my  
   church  
 — What then ? So much was saved if  
   aught were missed !  
 My sons, ye would not be my death ?  
   Go dig  
 The white-grape vineyard where the  
   oil-press stood,  
 Drop water gently till the surface sink,  
 And if ye find . . . Ah God, I know not,  
   I ! . . .  
 Bedded in store of rotten fig-leaves soft,  
 And corded up in a tight olive-frail,  
 Some lump, ah God, of *lapis lazuli*,  
 Big as a Jew's head cut off at the nape,  
 Blue as a vein o'er the Madonna's breast.  
 Sons, all have I bequeathed you, villas,  
   all,  
 That brave Frascati villa with its bath,  
 So, let the blue lump poise between my  
   knees,  
 Like God the Father's globe on both his  
   hands  
 Ye worship in the Jesu Church so gay,  
 For Gandolf shall not choose but see and  
   burst !  
 Swift as a weaver's shuttle fleet our  
   years :  
 Man goeth to the grave, and where is he ?  
 Did I say basalt for my slab, sons ?  
   Black —  
 'Twas ever antique-black I meant !  
   How else  
 Shall ye contrast my frieze to come  
   beneath ?

The bas-relief in bronze ye promised me.  
 Those Pans and Nymphs ye wot of, and  
   perchance  
 Some tripod, thyrsus, with a vase or so,  
 The Saviour at his sermon on the mount,  
 Saint Praxed in a glory, and one Pan  
 Ready to twitch the Nymph's last gar-  
   ment off,  
 And Moses with the tables . . . but I  
   know  
 Ye mark me not ! What do they whisper  
   thee,  
 Child of my bowels, Anselm ? Ah, ye  
   hope  
 To revel down my villas while I gasp  
 Bricked o'er with beggar's mouldy trav-  
   ertine  
 Which Gandolf from his tomb-top  
   chuckles at !  
 Nay, boys, ye love me — all of jasper,  
   then !  
 'Tis jasper ye stand pledged to, lest I  
   grieve.  
 My bath must needs be left behind,  
   alas !  
 One block, pure green as a pistachio-nut,  
 There's plenty jasper somewhere in the  
   world —  
 And have I not Saint Praxed's ear to  
   pray  
 Horses for ye, and brown Greek manu-  
   scripts,  
 And mistresses with great smooth marbly  
   limbs ?  
 — That's if ye carve my epitaph aright,  
 Choice Latin, picked phrase, Tully's  
   every word,  
 No gaudy ware like Gandolf's second  
   line —  
 Tully, my masters ? Ulpian serves his  
   need !  
 And then how I shall lie through cen-  
   turies,  
 And hear the blessed mutter of the mass,  
 And see God made and eaten all day long,  
 And feel the steady candle-flame, and  
   taste  
 Good strong thick stupefying incense-  
   smoke !  
 For as I lie here, hours of the dead night,  
 Dying in state and by such slow degrees,  
 I fold my arms as if they clasped a crook,  
 And stretch my feet forth straight as  
   stone can point,  
 And let the bedclothes, for a mortcloth,  
   drop



Into great laps and folds of sculptor's-work:  
And as yon tapers dwindle, and strange  
thoughts

Grow, with a certain humming in my ears,  
About the life before I lived this life,  
And this life too, popes, cardinals and  
priests,

Saint Praxed at his sermon on the mount,  
Your tall pale mother with her talking eyes,  
And new-found agate urns as fresh as day,  
And marble's language, Latin pure, discreet,

—Aha, ELUCESCEBAT quoth our friend?  
No Tully, said I, Ulpian at the best!

Evil and brief hath been my pilgrimage.  
All *lapis*, all, sons! Else I give the Pope  
My villas! Will ye ever eat my heart?  
Ever your eyes were as a lizard's quick,  
They glitter like your mother's for my  
soul,

Or ye would heighten my impoverished  
frieze,

Piece out its starved design, and fill my  
vase

With grapes, and add a visor and a Term,  
And to the tripod ye would tie a lynx  
That in his struggle throws the thyrsus  
down,

To comfort me on my entablature  
Whereon I am to lie till I must ask  
"Do I live, am I dead?" There, leave  
me, there!

For ye have stabbed me with ingratitude  
To death — ye wish it — God, ye wish it!  
Stone —

Gritstone, a-crumble! Clammy squares  
which sweat

As if the corpse they keep were oozing  
through —

And no more *lapis* to delight the world!  
Well, go! I bless ye. Fewer tapers there,  
But in a row: and, going, turn your backs  
— Ay, like departing altar-ministrants,  
And leave me in my church, the church  
for peace,

That I may watch at leisure if he leers —  
Old Gandolf — at me, from his onion-  
stone,

As still he envied me, so fair she was!<sup>1</sup>

1845.

<sup>1</sup> I know no other piece of modern English, prose or poetry, in which there is so much told, as in these lines, of the Renaissance spirit, — its worldliness, inconsistency, pride, hypocrisy, ignorance of itself, love of art, of luxury, and of good Latin. It is nearly all that I said of the central Renaissance in thirty pages of the *Stones of Venice*,

## SAUL

### I

SAID Abner, "At last thou art come! Ere  
I tell, ere thou speak,  
Kiss my cheek, wish me well!" Then I  
wished it, and did kiss his cheek.  
And he: "Since the King, O my friend,  
for thy countenance sent,  
Neither drunken nor eaten have we; nor  
until from his tent  
Thou return with the joyful assurance  
the King liveth yet,  
Shall our lip with the honey be bright,  
with the water be wet.  
For out of the black mid-tent's silence, a  
space of three days,  
Not a sound hath escaped to thy servants,  
of prayer nor of praise,  
To betoken that Saul and the Spirit have  
ended their strife,  
And that, faint in his triumph, the mon-  
arch sinks back upon life.

### II

"Yet now my heart leaps, O beloved!  
God's child with his dew  
On thy gracious gold hair, and those lilies  
still living and blue  
Just broken to twine round thy harp-  
strings, as if no wild heat  
Were now raging to torture the desert!"

### III

Then I, as was meet,  
Knelt down to the God of my fathers,  
and rose on my feet,  
And ran o'er the sand burnt to powder.  
The tent was unlooped;  
I pulled up the spear that obstructed, and  
under I stooped;  
Hands and knees on the slippery grass-  
patch, all withered and gone,

put into as many lines, Browning's being also the antecedent work. The worst of it is that this kind of concentrated writing needs so much solution before the reader can fairly get the good of it, that people's patience fails them, and they give the thing up as insoluble; though, truly, it ought to be to the current of common thought like Saladin's talisman, dipped in clear water, not soluble altogether, but making the element medicinal. (*Ruskin*.)

Other aspects of the Renaissance spirit, finer but equally true, are expressed, with similar concentration, in "Old Pictures in Florence," "Pictor Ignotus," "Andrea del Sarto," "A Grammarian's Funeral," etc., etc.

That extends to the second enclosure, I  
 groped my way on  
 Till I felt where the foldskirts fly open.  
 Then once more I prayed,  
 And opened the foldskirts and entered,  
 and was not afraid  
 But spoke, "Here is David, thy servant!"  
 And no voice replied.  
 At the first I saw naught but the black-  
 ness: but soon I descried  
 A something more black than the black-  
 ness — the vast, the upright  
 Main prop which sustains the pavilion:  
 and slow into sight  
 Grew a figure against it, gigantic and  
 blackest of all,  
 Then a sunbeam, that burst through the  
 tent-roof, showed Saul.

## IV

He stood as erect as that tent-prop, both  
 arms stretched out wide  
 On the great cross-support in the centre,  
 that goes to each side;  
 He relaxed not a muscle, but hung there  
 as, caught in his pangs  
 And waiting his change, the king-serpent  
 all heavily hangs,  
 Far away from his kind, in the pine, till  
 deliverance come  
 With the spring-time, — so agonized Saul,  
 drear and stark, blind and dumb.

## V

Then I tuned my harp, — took off the  
 lilies we twine round its chords  
 Lest they snap 'neath the stress of the  
 noontide — those sunbeams like swords!  
 And I first played the tune all our sheep  
 know, as, one after one,  
 So docile they come to the pen-door till  
 folding be done.  
 They are white and untorn by the bushes,  
 for lo, they have fed  
 Where the long grasses stifle the water  
 within the stream's bed;  
 And now one after one seeks its lodging,  
 as star follows star  
 Into eve and the blue far above us, — so  
 blue and so far!

## VI

— Then the tune for which quails on the  
 cornland will each leave his mate  
 To fly after the player; then, what makes  
 the crickets elate

Till for boldness they fight one another;  
 and then, what has weight  
 To set the quick jerboa a-musing outside  
 his sand house —  
 There are none such as he for a wonder,  
 half bird and half mouse!  
 God made all the creatures and gave them  
 our love and our fear,  
 To give sign, we and they are his children,  
 one family here.

## VII

Then I played the help-tune of our reap-  
 ers, their wine-song, when hand  
 Grasps at hand, eye lights eye in good  
 friendship, and great hearts expand  
 And grow one in the sense of this world's  
 life. — And then, the last song  
 When the dead man is praised on his  
 journey — "Bear, bear him along,  
 With his few faults shut up like dead  
 flowerets! Are balm seeds not here  
 To console us? The land has none left  
 such as he on the bier.  
 Oh, would we might keep thee, my  
 brother!" — And then, the glad chant  
 Of the marriage, — first go the young  
 maidens, next, she whom we vaunt  
 As the beauty, the pride of our dwelling.  
 — And then, the great march  
 Wherein man runs to man to assist him  
 and buttress an arch  
 Naught can break; who shall harm them,  
 our friends? Then, the chorus intoned  
 As the Levites go up to the altar in glory  
 enthroned.  
 But I stopped here: for here in the dark-  
 ness Saul groaned.

## VIII

And I paused, held my breath in such  
 silence, and listened apart;  
 And the tent shook, for mighty Saul  
 shuddered: and sparkles 'gan dart  
 From the jewels that woke in his turban,  
 at once, with a start,  
 All its lordly male-sapphires, and rubies  
 courageous at heart.  
 So the head: but the body still moved  
 not, still hung there erect.  
 And I bent once again to my playing,  
 pursued it unchecked,  
 As I sang: —

## IX

"Oh, our manhood's prime vigor!  
 No spirit feels waste,  
 Not a muscle is stopped in its playing  
 nor sinew unbraced.  
 Oh, the wild joys of living! the leaping  
 from rock up to rock,  
 The strong rending of boughs from the  
 fir-tree, the cool silver shock  
 Of the plunge in a pool's living water,  
 the hunt of the bear,  
 And the sultriness showing the lion is  
 couched in his lair.  
 And the meal, the rich dates yellowed  
 over with gold dust divine,  
 And the locust-flesh steeped in the  
 pitcher, the full draught of wine,  
 And the sleep in the dried river-channel  
 where bulrushes tell  
 That the water was wont to go warbling  
 so softly and well.  
 How good is man's life, the mere living!  
 how fit to employ  
 All the heart and the soul and the senses  
 forever in joy!  
 Hast thou loved the white locks of thy  
 father, whose sword thou didst guard  
 When he trusted thee forth with the  
 armies, for glorious reward?  
 Didst thou see the thin hands of thy  
 mother, held up as men sung  
 The low song of the nearly-departed, and  
 hear her faint tongue  
 Joining in while it could to the witness,  
 'Let one more attest,  
 I have lived, seen God's hand through a  
 lifetime, and all was for best?'  
 Then they sung through their tears in  
 strong triumph, not much, but the rest.  
 And thy brothers, the help and the con-  
 test, the working whence grew  
 Such result as, from seething grape-  
 bundles, the spirit strained true:  
 And the friends of thy boyhood — that  
 boyhood of wonder and hope,  
 Present promise and wealth of the future  
 beyond the eye's scope, —  
 Till lo, thou art grown to a monarch; a  
 people is thine;  
 And all gifts, which the world offers  
 singly, on one head combine!  
 On one head, all the beauty and strength,  
 love and rage (like the three  
 That, a-work in the rock, helps its labor  
 and lets the gold go)

High ambition and deeds which surpass  
 it, fame crowning them, — all  
 Brought to blaze on the head of one  
 creature — King Saul!"

## X

And lo, with that leap of my spirit, —  
 heart, hand, harp and voice,  
 Each lifting Saul's name out of sorrow,  
 each bidding rejoice  
 Saul's fame in the light it was made for  
 — as when, dare I say,  
 The Lord's army, in rapture of service,  
 strains through its array,  
 And upsoareth the cherubim-chariot —  
 "Saul!" cried I, and stopped,  
 And waited the thing that should follow.  
 Then Saul, who hung propped  
 By the tent's cross-support in the centre,  
 was struck by his name.  
 Have ye seen where Spring's arrowy  
 summons goes right to the aim,  
 And some mountain, the last to with-  
 stand her, that held (he alone,  
 While the vale laughed in freedom and  
 flowers) on a broad bust of stone  
 A year's snow bound about for a breast-  
 plate, — leaves grasp of the sheet?  
 Fold on fold all at once it crowds thun-  
 derously down to his feet,  
 And there fronts you, stark, black, but  
 alive yet, your mountain of old,  
 With his rents, the successive bequeath-  
 ing of ages untold —  
 Yea, each harm got in fighting your  
 battles, each furrow and scar  
 Of his head thrust 'twixt you and the  
 tempest — all hail, there they are!  
 — Now again to be softened with verdure,  
 again hold the nest  
 Of the dove, tempt the goat and its  
 young to the green on his crest  
 For their food in the ardors of summer.  
 One long shudder thrilled  
 All the tent till the very air tingled,  
 then sank and was stilled  
 At the King's self left standing before  
 me, released and aware.  
 What was gone, what remained? All  
 to traverse 'twixt hope and despair,  
 Death was past, life not come: so he  
 waited. Awhile his right hand  
 Held the brow, helped the eyes left too  
 vacant forthwith to remand

To their place what new objects should  
 enter: 'twas Saul as before.  
 I looked up and dared gaze at those eyes,  
 nor was hurt any more  
 Than by slow pallid sunsets in autumn,  
 ye watch from the shore,  
 At their sad level gaze o'er the ocean —  
 a sun's slow decline  
 Over hills which, resolved in stern silence,  
 o'erlap and entwine  
 Base with base to knit strength more  
 intensely: so, arm folded arm  
 O'er the chest whose slow heavings sub-  
 sided.

## XI

What spell or what charm,  
 (For awhile there was trouble within me),  
 what next should I urge  
 To sustain him where song had restored  
 him? — Song filled to the verge  
 His cup with the wine of this life, pressing  
 all that it yields  
 Of mere fruitage, the strength and the  
 beauty: beyond, on what fields,  
 Glean a vintage more potent and perfect  
 to brighten the eye  
 And bring blood to the lip, and commend  
 them the cup they put by?  
 He saith, "It is good;" still he drinks  
 not: he lets me praise life,  
 Gives assent, yet would die for his own  
 part.

## XII

Then fancies grew rife  
 Which had come long ago on the pasture,  
 when round me the sheep  
 Fed in silence — above, the one eagle  
 wheeled slow as in sleep;  
 And I lay in my hollow and mused on  
 the world that might lie  
 'Neath his ken, though I saw but the  
 strip 'twixt the hill and the sky:  
 And I laughed — "Since my days are  
 ordained to be passed with my flocks,  
 Let me people at least, with my fancies,  
 the plains and the rocks,  
 Dream the life I am never to mix with,  
 and image the show  
 Of mankind as they live in those fashions  
 I hardly shall know!  
 Schemes of life, its best rules and right  
 uses, the courage that gains,  
 And the prudence that keeps what men  
 strive for." And now these old trains

Of vague thought came again; I grew  
 surer; so, once more the string  
 Of my harp made response to my spirit,  
 as thus —

## XIII

"Yea, my King,"  
 I began — "thou dost well in rejecting  
 mere comforts that spring  
 From the mere mortal life held in common  
 by man and by brute:  
 In our flesh grows the branch of this  
 life, in our soul it bears fruit.  
 Thou hast marked the slow rise of the  
 tree, — how its stem trembled first  
 Till it passed the kid's lip, the stag's  
 antler; then safely outburst  
 The fan-branches all round; and thou  
 mindest when these too, in turn,  
 Broke a-bloom and the palm-tree seemed  
 perfect: yet more was to learn,  
 E'en the good that comes in with the  
 palm-fruit. Our dates shall we slight,  
 When their juice brings a cure for all  
 sorrow? or care for the plight  
 Of the palm's self whose slow growth  
 produced them? Not so! stem and  
 branch  
 Shall decay, nor be known in their place,  
 while the palm-wine shall stanch  
 Every wound of man's spirit in winter.  
 I pour thee such wine,  
 Leave the flesh to the fate it was fit for!  
 the spirit be thine!  
 By the spirit, when age shall o'ercome  
 thee, thou still shalt enjoy  
 More indeed, than at first when incon-  
 scious, the life of a boy.  
 Crush that life, and behold its wine run-  
 ning! Each deed thou hast done  
 Dies, revives, goes to work in the world!  
 until e'en as the sun  
 Looking down on the earth, though  
 clouds spoil him, though tempests  
 efface,  
 Can find nothing his own deed produced  
 not, must everywhere trace  
 The results of his past summer-prime, —  
 so, each ray of thy will,  
 Every flash of thy passion and prowess,  
 long over, shall thrill  
 Thy whole people, the countless, with  
 ardor, till they too give forth  
 A like cheer to their sons, who in turn,  
 fill the South and the North



With the radiance thy deed was the germ  
 of. Carouse in the past!  
 But the license of age has its limit; thou  
 diest at last:  
 As the lion when age dims his eyeball,  
 the rose at her height,  
 So with man — so his power and his  
 beauty forever take flight.  
 No! Again a long draught of my soul-  
 wine! Look forth o'er the years!  
 Thou hast done now with eyes for the  
 actual; begin with the seer's!  
 Is Saul dead? In the depth of the vale  
 make his tomb — bid arise  
 A gray mountain of marble heaped four-  
 square, till, built to the skies,  
 Let it mark where the great First King  
 slumbers: whose fame would ye know?  
 Up above see the rock's naked face,  
 where the record shall go  
 In great characters cut by the scribe, —  
 Such was Saul, so he did;  
 With the sages directing the work, by  
 the populace chid, —  
 For not half, they'll affirm, is comprised  
 there! Which fault to amend,  
 In the grove with his kind grows the  
 cedar, whereon they shall spend  
 (See, in tablets 'tis level before them)  
 their praise, and record  
 With the gold of the graver, Saul's story,  
 — the statesman's great word  
 Side by side with the poet's sweet com-  
 ment. The river's a-wave  
 With smooth paper-reeds grazing each  
 other when prophet-winds rave:  
 So the pen gives unborn generations their  
 due and their part  
 In thy being! Then, first of the mighty,  
 thank God that thou art!"

## XIV

And behold while I sang . . . but O  
 Thou who didst grant me that day,  
 And before it not seldom hast granted  
 thy help to essay,  
 Carry on and complete an adventure, —  
 my shield and my sword  
 In that act where my soul was thy ser-  
 vant, thy word was my word, —  
 Still be with me, who then at the summit  
 of human endeavor  
 And scaling the highest, man's thought  
 could, gazed hopeless as ever

On the new stretch of heaven above me  
 — till, mighty to save,  
 Just one lift of thy hand cleared that  
 distance — God's throne from man's  
 grave!  
 Let me tell out my tale to its ending —  
 my voice to my heart  
 Which can scarce dare believe in what  
 marvels last night I took part,  
 As this morning I gather the fragments,  
 alone with my sheep,  
 And still fear lest the terrible glory  
 vanish like sleep!  
 For I wake in the gray dewy covert, while  
 Hebron upheaves  
 The dawn struggling with night on his  
 shoulder, and Kidron retrieves  
 Slow the damage of yesterday's sunshine.

## XV

I say then, — my song  
 While I sang thus, assuring the monarch,  
 and ever more strong  
 Made a proffer of good to console him —  
 he slowly resumed  
 His old motions and habitudes kingly.  
 The right hand replumed  
 His black locks to their wonted compo-  
 sure, adjusted the swathes  
 Of his turban, and see — the huge sweat  
 that his countenance bathes,  
 He wipes off with the robe; and he girds  
 now his loins as of yore,  
 And feels slow for the armlets of price,  
 with the clasp set before.  
 He is Saul, ye remember in glory, — ere  
 error had bent  
 The broad brow from the daily com-  
 munion; and still, though much spent  
 Be the life and the bearing that front  
 you, the same, God did choose,  
 To receive what a man may waste, de-  
 grate, never quite lose.  
 So sank he along by the tent-prop till,  
 stayed by the pile  
 Of his armor and war-cloak and garments,  
 he leaned there awhile,  
 And sat out my singing, — one arm round  
 the tent-prop, to raise  
 His bent head, and the other hung slack  
 — till I touched on the praise  
 I foresaw from all men in all time, to the  
 man patient there;  
 And thus ended, the harp falling forward.  
 Then first I was 'ware



That he sat, as I say, with my head just  
 above his vast knees  
 Which were thrust out on each side  
 around me, like oak roots which please  
 To encircle a lamb when it slumbers.  
 I looked up to know  
 If the best I could do had brought solace;  
 he spoke not, but slow  
 Lifted up the hand slack at his side, till  
 he laid it with care  
 Soft and grave, but in mild settled will,  
 on my brow: through my hair  
 The larger fingers were pushed, and he  
 bent back my head, with kind power —  
 All my face back, intent to peruse it, as  
 men do a flower.  
 Thus held he me there with his great  
 eyes that scrutinized mine —  
 And oh, all my heart how it loved him!  
 but where was the sign?  
 I yearned — "Could I help thee, my  
 father, inventing a bliss,  
 I would add, to that life of the past, both  
 the future and this;  
 I would give thee new life altogether, as  
 good, ages hence,  
 As this moment, — had love but the  
 warrant, love's heart to dispense!"

## XVI

Then the truth came upon me. No hark  
 more — no song more! outbroke —

## XVII

"I have gone the whole round of creation:  
 I saw and I spoke:  
 I, a work of God's hand for that purpose  
 received in my brain  
 And pronounced on the rest of his hand-  
 work — returned him again  
 His creation's approval or censure: I  
 spoke as I saw:  
 I report, as a man may of God's work —  
 all's love, yet all's law.  
 Now I lay down the judgeship he lent me.  
 Each faculty tasked  
 To perceive him, has gained an abyss,  
 where a dewdrop was asked.  
 Have I knowledge? confounded it  
 shrivels at Wisdom laid bare.  
 Have I forethought? how purblind, how  
 blank to the Infinite Care!  
 Do I task any faculty highest, to image  
 success?  
 I but open my eyes, — and perfection,  
 no more and no less,

In the kind I imagined, full-fronts me,  
 and God is seen God  
 In the star, in the stone, in the flesh, in  
 the soul and the clod.  
 And thus looking within and around me,  
 I ever renew  
 (With that stoop of the soul which in  
 bending upraises it too)  
 The submission of man's nothing-perfect  
 to God's all-complete,  
 As by each new obeisance in spirit, I  
 climb to his feet.  
 Yet with all this abounding experience,  
 this deity known,  
 I shall dare to discover some province,  
 some gift of my own.  
 There's a faculty pleasant to exercise,  
 hard to hoodwink,  
 I am fain to keep still in abeyance, (I  
 laugh as I think)  
 Lest, insisting to claim and parade in it,  
 wot ye, I worst  
 E'en the Giver in one gift. — Behold, I  
 could love if I durst!  
 But I sink the pretension as fearing a  
 man may o'ertake  
 God's own speed in the one way of love:  
 I abstain for love's sake.  
 — What, my soul? see thus far and no  
 farther? when doors great and small,  
 Nine-and-ninety flew ope at our touch,  
 should the hundredth appall?  
 In the least things have faith, yet dis-  
 trust in the greatest of all?  
 Do I find love so full in my nature, God's  
 ultimate gift,  
 That I doubt his own love can compete  
 with it? Here, the parts shift?  
 Here, the creature surpass the Creator, —  
 the end, what Began?  
 Would I fain in my impotent yearning  
 do all for this man,  
 And dare doubt he alone shall not help  
 him, who yet alone can?  
 Would it ever have entered my mind, the  
 bare will, much less power.  
 To bestow on this Saul what I sang of,  
 the marvellous dower  
 Of the life he was gifted and filled with?  
 to make such a soul,  
 Such a body, and then such an earth for  
 insphering the whole?  
 And doth it not enter my mind (as my  
 warm tears attest)  
 These good things being given, to go on,  
 and give one more, the best?

Ay, to save and redeem and restore him,  
 maintain at the height  
 This perfection, — succeed with life's  
 day-spring, death's minute of night?  
 Interpose at the difficult minute, snatch  
 Saul the mistake,  
 Saul the failure, the ruin he seems now  
 — and bid him awake  
 From the dream, the probation, the prelude,  
 to find himself set  
 Clear and safe in new light and new life,  
 — a new harmony yet  
 To be run, and continued, and ended —  
 who knows? — or endure!  
 The man taught enough by life's dream,  
 of the rest to make sure;  
 By the pain-throb, triumphantly winning  
 intensified bliss,  
 And the next world's reward and repose,  
 by the struggles in this.

## XVIII

"I believe it! 'Tis thou, God, that  
 givest, 'tis I who receive:  
 In the first is the last, in thy will is my  
 power to believe.  
 All's one gift: thou canst grant it more-  
 over, as prompt to my prayer  
 As I breathe out this breath, as I open  
 these arms to the air.  
 From thy will stream the worlds, life and  
 nature, thy dread Sabaoth:  
 I will? — the mere atoms despise me!  
 Why am I not loth  
 To look that, even that in the face too?  
 Why is it I dare  
 Think but lightly of such impuissance?  
 What stops my despair?  
 This; — 'tis not what man Does which  
 exalts him, but what man Would do!  
 See the King — I would help him but can-  
 not, the wishes fall through.  
 Could I wrestle to raise him from sorrow,  
 grow poor to enrich,  
 To fill up his life, starve my own out, I  
 would — knowing which,  
 I know that my service is perfect. Oh,  
 speak through me now!  
 Would I suffer for him that I love? So  
 wouldst thou — so wilt thou!  
 So shall crown thee the topmost, ineffa-  
 blest, uttermost crown —  
 And thy love fill infinitude wholly, nor  
 leave up nor down

One spot for the creature to stand in! It  
 is by no breath,  
 Turn of eye, wave of hand, that salvation  
 joins issue with death!  
 As thy Love is discovered almighty,  
 almighty be proved  
 Thy power, that exists with and for it,  
 of being Beloved!  
 He who did most, shall bear most; the  
 strongest shall stand the most weak.  
 'Tis the weakness in strength, that I cry  
 for! my flesh, that I seek  
 In the Godhead! I seek and I find it. O  
 Saul, it shall be  
 A Face like my face that receives thee;  
 a Man like to me,  
 Thou shalt love and be loved by, forever:  
 a Hand like this hand  
 Shall throw open the gates of new life to  
 thee! See the Christ stand!"

## XIX

I know not too well how I found my way  
 home in the night.  
 There were witnesses, cohorts about me,  
 to left and to right,  
 Angels, powers, the unuttered, unseen,  
 the alive, the aware:  
 I repressed, I got through them as hardly,  
 as strugglingly there,  
 As a runner beset by the populace fam-  
 ished for news —  
 Life or death. The whole earth was  
 awakened, hell loosed with her crews;  
 And the stars of night beat with emotion,  
 and tingled and shot  
 Out in fire the strong pain of pent knowl-  
 edge: but I fainted not,  
 For the Hand still impelled me at once  
 and supported, suppressed  
 All the tumult, and quenched it with  
 quiet, and holy behest,  
 Till the rapture was shut in itself, and  
 the earth sank to rest.  
 Anon at the dawn, all that trouble had  
 withered from earth —  
 Not so much, but I saw it die out in the  
 day's tender birth;  
 In the gathered intensity brought to the  
 gray of the hills;  
 In the shuddering forests' held breath;  
 in the sudden wind-thrills;  
 In the startled wild beasts that bore off,  
 each with eye sidling still

Though averted with wonder and dread;  
 in the birds stiff and chill  
 That rose heavily, as I approached them,  
 made stupid with awe:  
 E'en the serpent that slid away silent, —  
 he felt the new law.  
 The same stared in the white humid  
 faces upturned by the flowers;  
 The same worked in the heart of the  
 cedar and moved the vine-bowers:  
 And the little brooks witnessing mur-  
 mured, persistent and low,  
 With their obstinate, all put hushed  
 voices — "E'en so, it is so!"  
 1845. 1855.<sup>1</sup>

## A WOMAN'S LAST WORD

LET'S contend no more, Love,  
 Strive nor weep:  
 All be as before, Love,  
 — Only sleep!

What so wild as words are?  
 I and thou  
 In debate, as birds are,  
 Hawk on bough!

See the creature stalking  
 While we speak!  
 Hush and hide the talking,  
 Cheek on cheek!

What so false as truth is,  
 False to thee?  
 Where the serpent's tooth is  
 Shun the tree —

Where the apple reddens  
 Never pry —  
 Lest we lose our Edens,  
 Eve and I.

Be a god and hold me  
 With a charm!  
 Be a man and fold me  
 With thine arm!

Teach me, only teach, Love!  
 As I ought  
 I will speak thy speech, Love,  
 Think thy thought —

Meet, if thou require it,  
 Both demands,  
 Laying flesh and spirit  
 In thy hands.

That shall be to-morrow,  
 Not to-night.  
 I must bury sorrow  
 Out of sight:

— Must a little weep, Love,  
 (Foolish me!)  
 And so fall asleep, Love,  
 Loved by thee. 1855.

## EVELYN HOPE

BEAUTIFUL Evelyn Hope is dead!  
 Sit and watch by her side an hour.  
 That is her book-shelf, this her bed;  
 She plucked that piece of geranium-  
 flower,  
 Beginning to die too, in the glass;  
 Little has yet been changed, I think:  
 The shutters are shut, no light may pass  
 Save two long rays through the hinge's  
 chink.

Sixteen years old when she died!  
 Perhaps she had scarcely heard my  
 name;  
 It was not her time to love; beside,  
 Her life had many a hope and aim,  
 Duties enough and little cares,  
 And now was quiet, now astir,  
 Till God's hand beckoned unawares, —  
 And the sweet white brow is all of  
 her.

Is it too late then, Evelyn Hope?  
 What, your soul was pure and true,  
 The good stars met in your horoscope,  
 Made you of spirit, fire and dew —  
 And, just because I was thrice as old  
 And our paths in the world diverged so  
 wide,  
 Each was naught to each, must I be  
 told?  
 We were fellow mortals, naught beside?

No, indeed! for God above  
 Is great to grant, as mighty to make,  
 And creates the love to reward the love:  
 I claim you still, for my own love's  
 sake!

<sup>1</sup> The first part of the poem, up to Section X, was published in *Dramatic Romances and Lyrics*, 1845; the complete poem, in *Men and Women*, 1855.

Delayed it may be for more lives yet,  
 Through worlds I shall traverse, not a  
     few :  
 Much is to learn, much to forget  
 Ere the time be come for taking you.

But the time will come — at last it will,  
 When, Evelyn Hope, what meant (I  
     shall say)  
 In the lower earth, in the years long still,  
 That body and soul so pure and gay?  
 Why your hair was amber, I shall divine,  
 And your mouth of your own gera-  
     nium's red —  
 And what you would do with me, in fine,  
 In the new life come in the old life's  
     stead.

I have lived (I shall say) so much since  
     then,  
 Given up myself so many times,  
 Gained me the gains of various men,  
 Ransacked the ages, spoiled the climes;  
 Yet one thing, one, in my soul's full  
     scope,  
 Either I missed or itself missed me :  
 And I want and find you, Evelyn Hope !  
 What is the issue ? Let us see !

I loved you, Evelyn, all the while !  
 My heart seemed full as it could hold ;  
 There was place and to spare for the frank  
     young smile,  
 And the red young mouth, and the  
     hair's young gold.  
 So, hush, — I will give you this leaf to  
     keep :  
 See, I shut it inside the sweet cold  
     hand !  
 There, that is our secret : go to sleep !  
 You will wake, and remember, and  
     understand. 1855.

### LOVE AMONG THE RUINS

WHERE the quiet-colored end of evening  
     smiles  
     Miles and miles  
 On the solitary pastures where our sheep  
     Half-asleep  
 Tinkle homeward through the twilight,  
     stray or stop  
     As they crop —  
 Was the site once of a city great and gay,  
     (So they say)

Of our country's very capital, its prince  
     Ages since  
 Held his court in, gathered councils,  
     wielding far  
     Peace or war.

Now, — the country does not even boast  
     a tree,  
     As you see,  
 To distinguish slopes of verdure, certain  
     rills  
     From the hills  
 Intersect and give a name to, (else they  
     run  
     Into one,)  
 Where the domed and daring palace  
     shot its spires  
     Up like fires  
 O'er the hundred-gated circuit of a wall  
     Bounding all,  
 Made of marble, men might march on  
     nor be pressed,  
     Twelve abreast.

And such plenty and perfection, see, of  
     grass  
     Never was !  
 Such a carpet as, this summer-time, o'er-  
     spreads  
     And embeds  
 Every vestige of the city, guessed alone,  
     Stock or stone —  
 Where a multitude of men breathed joy  
     and woe  
     Long ago ;  
 Lust of glory pricked their hearts up,  
     dread of shame  
     Struck them tame ;  
 And that glory and that shame alike, the  
     gold  
     Bought and sold.

Now, — the single little turret that re-  
     mains  
     On the plains,  
 By the caper overrooted, by the gourd  
     Overscored,  
 While the patching houseleek's head of  
     blossom winks  
     Through the chinks —  
 Marks the basement whence a tower in  
     ancient time  
     Sprang sublime,  
 And a burning ring, all round, the chariots  
     traced  
     As they raced,

And the monarch and his minions and his  
dames

Viewed the games.

And I know, while thus the quiet-colored  
eve

Smiles to leave

To their folding, all our many-tinkling  
fleece

In such peace,

And the slopes and rills in undistin-  
guished gray

Melt away —

That a girl with eager eyes and yellow hair

Waits me there

In the turret whence the charioteers  
caught soul

For the goal,

When the king looked, where she looks  
now, breathless, dumb

Till I come.

But he looked upon the city, every side,

Far and wide,

All the mountains topped with temples,  
all the grades

Colonnades,

All the causeys, bridges, aqueducts, —  
and then,

All the men!

When I do come, she will speak not, she  
will stand,

Either hand

On my shoulder, give her eyes the first  
embrace

Of my face,

Ere we rush, ere we extinguish sight and  
speech

Each on each.

In one year they sent a million fighters  
forth

South and North,

And they built their gods a brazen pillar  
high

As the sky,

Yet reserved a thousand chariots in full  
force —

Gold, of course.

Oh heart! oh blood that freezes, blood  
that burns!

Earth's returns

For whole centuries of folly, noise and sin!

Shut them in,

With their triumphs and their glories and  
the rest!

Love is best.

1855.

## UP AT A VILLA — DOWN IN THE CITY

(AS DISTINGUISHED BY AN ITALIAN PERSON  
OF QUALITY)

HAD I but plenty of money, money  
enough and to spare,

The house for me no doubt, were a house  
in the city-square;

Ah, such a life, such a life, as one leads at  
the window there!

Something to see, by Bacchus, something  
to hear, at least!

There, the whole day long, one's life is a  
perfect feast;

While up at a villa one lives, I maintain  
it, no more than a beast.

Well now, look at our villa! stuck like  
the horn of a bull

Just on a mountain-edge as bare as the  
creature's skull,

Save a mere shag of a bush with hardly  
a leaf to pull!

— I scratch my own, sometimes, to see  
if the hair's turned wool.

But the city, oh the city — the square  
with the houses! Why,

They are stone-faced, white as a curd,  
there's something to take the eye!

Houses in four straight lines, not a single  
front awry;

You watch who crosses and gossips, who  
saunters, who hurries by;

Green blinds, as a matter of course, to  
draw when the sun gets high;

And the shops with fanciful signs which  
are painted properly.

What of a villa? Though winter be over  
in March by rights,

'Tis May perhaps ere the snow shall have  
withered well off the heights;

You've the brown ploughed land before,  
where the oxen steam and wheeze,

And the hills over-smoked behind by the  
faint gray olive-trees.

Is it better in May, I ask you? You've  
summer all at once;

In a day he leaps complete with a few  
strong April suns.

'Mid the sharp short emerald wheat,  
scarce risen three fingers well,

The wild tulip, at end of its tube, blows  
out its great red bell

Like a thin clear bubble of blood, for the  
children to pick and sell.



Is it ever hot in the square? There's a fountain to spout and splash!

In the shade it sings and springs: in the shine such foam-bows flash

On the horses with curling fish-tails, that prance and paddle and pash

Round the lady atop in her conch — fifty gazers do not abash,

Though all that she wears is some weeds round her waist in a sort of sash.

All the year long at the villa, nothing to see though you linger,

Except yon cypress that points like death's lean lifted forefinger.

Some think fireflies pretty, when they mix i' the corn and mingle,

Or thrif the stinking hemp till the stalks of it seem a-tingle.

Late August or early September, the stunning cicala is shrill,

And the bees keep their tiresome whine round the resinous firs on the hill.

Enough of the seasons, — I spare you the months of the fever and chill.

Ere you open your eyes in the city, the blessed church-bells begin:

No sooner the bells leave off than the diligence rattles in:

You get the pick of the news, and it costs you never a pin.

By and by, there's the travelling doctor gives pills, lets blood, draws teeth;

Or the Pulcinello-trumpet breaks up the market beneath.

At the post-office such a scene-picture — the new play, piping hot!

And a notice how, only this morning, three liberal thieves were shot.

Above it, behold the Archbishop's most fatherly of rebukes,

And beneath, with his crown and his lion, some little new law of the Duke's!

Or a sonnet with flowery marge, to the Reverend Don So-and-so,

Who is Dante, Boccaccio, Petrarca, Saint Jerome, and Cicero,

"And moreover," (the sonnet goes rhyming,) "the skirts of Saint Paul has reached,

Having preached us those six Lent-lectures more unctuous than ever he preached."

Noon strikes, — here sweeps the procession! our Lady borne smiling and smart

With a pink gauze gown all spangles, and seven swords stuck in her heart!

*Bang-whang-whang* goes the drum, *tootle-te-tootle* the fife;

No keeping one's haunches still: it's the greatest pleasure in life.

But bless you, it's dear — it's dear! fowls, wine, at double the rate.

They have clapped a new tax upon salt, and what oil pays passing the gate

It's a horror to think of. And so, the villa for me, not the city!

Beggars can scarcely be choosers; but still — ah, the pity, the pity!

Look, two and two go the priests, then the monks with cowls and sandals,

And the penitents dressed in white shirts, a-holding the yellow candles;

One, he carries a flag up straight, and another a cross with handles,

And the Duke's guard brings up the rear, for the better prevention of scandals:

*Bang-whang-whang* goes the drum, *tootle-te-tootle* the fife.

Oh, a day in the city-square, there is no such pleasure in life! 1855.

#### A TOCCATA OF GALUPPI'S

ON Galuppi, Baldassare, this is very sad to find!

I can hardly misconceive you; it would prove me deaf and blind;

But although I take your meaning, 'tis with such a heavy mind!

Here you come with your old music, and here's all the good it brings.

What, they lived once thus at Venice where the merchants were the kings,

Where St. Mark's is, where the Doges used to wed the sea with rings?

Ay, because the sea's the street there; and 'tis arched by . . . what you call

. . . Shylock's bridge with houses on it, where they kept the carnival:

I was never out of England — it's as if I saw it all.

Did young people take their pleasure when the sea was warm in May?

Balls and masks begun at midnight, burning ever to mid-day,

When they made up fresh adventures for the morrow, do you say?

Was a lady such a lady, cheeks so round  
and lips so red, —  
On her neck the small face buoyant, like  
a bell-flower on its bed,  
O'er the breast's superb abundance where  
a man might base his head?

Well, and it was graceful of them —  
they'd break talk off and afford  
— She, to bite her mask's black velvet —  
he, to finger on his sword,  
While you sat and played Toccatas,  
stately at the clavichord?

What? Those lesser thirds so plaintive,  
sixths diminished, sigh on sigh,  
Told them something? Those suspen-  
sions those solutions — "Must we die?"  
Those commiserating sevenths — "Life  
might last! we can but try!"

"Were you happy?" — "Yes." — "And  
are you still as happy?" — "Yes.  
And you?"

— "Then, more kisses!" — "Did *I* stop  
them, when a million seemed so few?"  
Hark, the dominant's persistence till it  
must be answered to!

So, an octave struck the answer. Oh,  
they praised you, I dare say!

"Brave Galuppi! that was music! good  
alike at grave and gay!

I can always leave off talking when I hear  
a master play!"

Then they left you for their pleasure:  
till in due time, one by one,  
Some with lives that came to nothing,  
some with deeds as well undone,  
Death stepped tacitly and took them  
where they never see the sun.

But when I sit down to reason, think to  
take my stand nor swerve,  
While I triumph o'er a secret wrung from  
nature's close reserve,  
In you come with your cold music till I  
creep through every nerve.

Yes, you, like a ghostly cricket, creaking  
where a house was burned:

"Dust and ashes, dead and done with,  
Venice spent what Venice earned.

The soul, doubtless, is immortal — where  
a soul can be discerned.

"Yours for instance: you know physics,  
something of geology,  
Mathematics are your pastime; souls  
shall rise in their degree;  
Butterflies may dread extinction, —  
you'll not die, it cannot be!

"As for Venice and her people, merely  
born to bloom and drop,  
Here on earth they bore their fruitage,  
mirth and folly were the crop:  
What of soul was left, I wonder, when the  
kissing had to stop?

"Dust and ashes!" So you creak it, and  
I want the heart to scold.

Dear dead women, with such hair, too  
— what's become of all the gold  
Used to hang and brush their bosoms!  
I feel chilly and grown old. 1855.

## OLD PICTURES IN FLORENCE

THE morn when first it thunders in  
March,

The eel in the pond gives a leap, they  
say:

As I leaned and looked over the aloed arch  
Of the villa-gate this warm March day,  
No flash snapped, no dumb thunder rolled  
In the valley beneath where, white and  
wide

And washed by the morning water gold,  
Florence lay out on the mountain-side.

River and bridge and street and square  
Lay mine, as much at my beck and call,  
Through the live translucent bath of air,  
As the sights in a magic crystal ball.

And of all I saw and of all I praised,  
The most to praise and the best to see,  
Was the startling bell-tower Giotto raised:  
But why did it more than startle me?

Giotto, how, with that soul of yours,  
Could you play me false who loved you  
so?

Some slights if a certain heart endures  
Yet it feels, I would have your fellows  
know!

I' faith, I perceive not why I should care  
To break a silence that suits them best,  
But the thing grows somewhat hard to  
bear

When I find a Giotto join the rest.

On the arch where olives overhead  
 Print the blue sky with twig and leaf,  
 (That sharp-curved leaf which they never  
 shed)

'Twixt the aloes, I used to lean in chief,  
 And mark through the winter afternoons,  
 By a gift God grants me now and then,  
 In the mild decline of those suns like  
 moons,  
 Who walked in Florence, besides her  
 men.

They might chirp and chaffer, come and  
 go

For pleasure or profit, her men alive —  
 My business was hardly with them, I trow,  
 But with empty cells of the human  
 hive;

— With the chapter-room, the cloister-  
 porch,

The church's apsis, aisle or nave,  
 Its crypt, one fingers along with a torch  
 Its face set full for the sun to shave.

Wherever a fresco peels and drops,  
 Wherever an outline weakens and wanes  
 Till the latest life in the painting stops,  
 Stands One whom each fainter pulse-  
 tick pains:

One, wishful each scrap should clutch the  
 brick,

Each tinge not wholly escape the  
 plaster,

— A lion who dies of an ass's kick,  
 The wronged great soul of an ancient  
 Master.

For oh, this world and the wrong it does!  
 They are safe in heaven with their  
 backs to it,

The Michaels and Rafaels, you hum and  
 buzz

Round the works of, you of the little  
 wit!

Do their eyes contract to the earth's old  
 scope,

Now that they see God face to face,  
 And have all attained to be poets, I hope?  
 'Tis their holiday now, in any case.

Much they reckon of your praise and you!  
 But the wronged great souls — can  
 they be quit

Of a world where their work is all to do,  
 Where you style them, you of the little  
 wit,

Old Master This and Early the Other,  
 Not dreaming that Old and New are  
 fellows:

A younger succeeds to an elder brother,  
 Da Vincis derive in good time from  
 Dellos.

And here where your praise might yield/  
 returns,

And a handsome word or two give  
 help,

Here, after your kind, the mastiff girns  
 And the puppy pack of poodles yelp.

What, not a word for Stefano there,  
 Of brow once prominent and starry,  
 Called Nature's Ape, and the world's  
 despair

For his peerless painting? (See Va-  
 sari.)

There stands the Master. Study, my  
 friends,

What a man's work comes to! So he  
 plans it,

Performs it, perfects it, makes amends  
 For the toiling and moiling, and then,  
*sic transit!*

Happier the thrifty blind-folk labor,  
 With upturned eye while the hand is  
 busy,

Not sidling a glance at the coin of their  
 neighbor!

'Tis looking downward that makes one  
 dizzy.

"If you knew their work you would deal  
 your dole."

May I take upon me to instruct you?  
 When Greek Art ran and reached the  
 goal,

Thus much had the world to boast *in*  
*fructu* —

The Truth of Man, as by God first  
 spoken,

Which the actual generations garble,  
 Was re-uttered, and Soul (which Limbs  
 betoken)

And Limbs (Soul informs) made new in  
 marble.

So you saw yourself as you wished you  
 were,

As you might have been, as you cannot  
 be;

Earth here, rebuked by Olympus there:  
 And grew content in your poor degree

With your little power, by those statues' godhead,  
 And your little scope, by their eyes' full sway,  
 And your little grace, by their grace embodied  
 And your little date, by their forms that stay.

You would fain be kinglier, say, than I am?

Even so, you will not sit like Theseus,  
 You would prove a model? The Son of Priam,

Has yet the advantage in arms' and knees' use.

You're wroth — can you slay your snake like Apollo?

You're grieved — still Niobe's the grander!

You live — there's the Racers' frieze to follow:

You die — there's the dying Alexander.

So, testing your weakness by their strength,

Your meagre charms by their rounded beauty,

Measured by Art in your breadth and length,

You learned — to submit is a mortal's duty.

— When I say "you" 'tis the common soul,

The collective, I mean: the race of Man

That receives life in parts to live in a whole,

And grow here according to God's clear plan.

Growth came when, looking your last on them all,

You turned your eyes inwardly one fine day

And cried with a start — What if we so small

Be greater and grander the while than they?

Are they perfect of lineament, perfect of stature?

In both, of such lower types are we

Precisely because of our wider nature;  
 For time, theirs — ours, for eternity.

To-day's brief passion limits their range;  
 It seethes with the morrow for us and more.

They are perfect — how else? they shall never change:

We are faulty — why not? we have time in store.

The Artificer's hand is not arrested

With us; we are rough-hewn, nowise polished:

They stand for our copy, and once, invested

With all they can teach, we shall see them abolished.

'Tis a life-long toil till our lump be leaven —

The better! What's come to perfection perishes.

Things learned on earth, we shall practise in heaven:

Works done least rapidly, Art most cherishes.

Thyself shalt afford the example, Giotto!

Thy one work, not to decrease or diminish,

Done at a stroke, was just (was it not?)  
 "O!"

Thy great Campanile is still to finish.

Is it true that we are now, and shall be hereafter,

But what and where depend on life's minute?

Hails heavenly cheer or infernal laughter  
 Our first step out of the gulf or in it?

Shall Man, such step within his endeavor,  
 Man's face, have no more play and action

Than joy which is crystallized forever,  
 Or grief, an eternal petrification?

On which I conclude, that the early painters,

To cries of "Greek Art and what more wish you?" —

Replied, "To become now self-acquainters,  
 And paint man, man, whatever the issue!"

Make new hopes shine through the flesh they fray,

New fears aggrandize the rags and tatters:

To bring the invisible full into play!

Let the visible go to the dogs — what matters?"

Give these, I exhort you, their guerdon  
and glory  
For daring so much, before they well  
did it.

The first of the new, in our race's story,  
Beats the last of the old; 'tis no idle  
quiddit.

The worthies began a revolution,  
Which if on earth you intend to ac-  
knowledge,

Why, honor them now! (ends my allocu-  
tion)

Nor confer your degree when the folk  
leave college.

There's a fancy some lean to and others  
hate —

That, when this life is ended, begins  
New work for the soul in another state,  
Where it strives and gets weary, loses  
and wins:

Where the strong and the weak, this  
world's congeries,

Repeat in large what they practised in  
small,

Through life after life in unlimited  
series;

Only the scale's to be changed, that's  
all.

Yet I hardly know. When a soul has  
seen

By the means of Evil that Good is  
best,

And, through earth and its noise, what  
is heaven's serene, —

When our faith in the same has stood  
the test —

Why the child grown man, you burn the  
rod,

The uses of labor are surely done;

There remaineth a rest for the people of  
God:

And I have had troubles enough, for  
one.

But at any rate I have loved the season  
Of Art's spring-birth so dim and dewy;

My sculptor is Nicolo the Pisan,

My painter — who but Cimabue?

Nor ever was man of them all indeed,

From these to Ghiberti and Ghirlan-  
dajo,

Could say that he missed my critic-meed.

So, now to my special grievance —  
heigh-ho!

Their ghosts still stand, as I said before,  
Watching each fresco flaked and rasped,  
Blocked up, knocked out, or white-  
washed o'er:

— No getting again what the church  
has grasped!

The works on the wall must take their  
chance;

"Works never conceded to England's  
thick clime!"

(I hope they prefer their inheritance  
Of a bucketful of Italian quick-lime.)

When they go at length, with such a  
shaking

Of heads o'er the old delusion, sadly  
Each master his way through the black  
streets taking,

Where many a lost work breathes  
though badly —

Why don't they bethink them of who has  
merited?

Why not reveal, while their pictures dree  
Such doom, how a captive might be out-  
ferreted?

Why is it they never remember me?

Not that I expect the great Bigordi,  
Nor Sandro to hear me, chivalric, belli-  
cose;

Nor the wronged Lippino; and not a  
word I

Say of a scrap of Frà Angelico's:

But are you too fine, Taddeo Gaddi,

To grant me a taste of your intonaco,  
Some Jerome that seeks the heaven with a  
sad eye?

Not a churlish saint, Lorenzo Monaco?

Could not the ghost with the close red cap,  
My Pollajolo, the twice a craftsman,

Save me a sample, give me the hap

Of a muscular Christ that shows the  
draughtsman?

No Virgin by him the somewhat petty,  
Of finical touch and tempera crumbly—

Could not Alesso Baldovinetti

Contribute so much, I ask him humbly?

Margheritone of Arezzo,

With the grave-clothes garb and swad-  
dling barret,

(Why purse up mouth and beak in a pet  
so,

You bald old saturnine poll-clawed  
parrot?)



Not a poor glimmering Crucifixion,  
Where in the foreground kneels the  
donor?

If such remain, as is my conviction,  
The hoarding it does you but little  
honor.

They pass; for them the panels may  
thrill,

The tempera grow alive and tinglish;  
Their pictures are left to the mercies still  
Of dealers and stealers, Jews and the  
English,

Who, seeing mere money's worth in their  
prize,

Will sell it to somebody calm as Zeno  
At naked High Art, and in ecstasies  
Before some clay-cold vile Carlino!

No matter for these! But Giotto, you,  
Have you allowed, as the town-tongues  
babble it. —

Oh, never! it shall not be counted true —  
That a certain precious little tablet  
Which Buonarrotti eyed like a lover —  
Was buried so long in oblivion's womb  
And, left for another than I to discover,  
Turns up at last! and to whom? — to  
whom?

I, that have haunted the dim San Spirito,  
(Or was it rather the Ognissanti?)  
Patient on altar-step planting a weary  
toe!

Nay, I shall have it yet! *Detur  
amanti!*

My Koh-i-noor — or (if that's a platitude)  
Jewel of Giamschid, the Persian Sofi's  
eye;

So, in anticipative gratitude,  
What if I take up my hope and proph-  
esy?

When the hour grows ripe, and a certain  
dotard

Is pitched, no parcel that needs invoic-  
ing,

To the worse side of the Mont St. Go-  
thard,

We shall begin by way of rejoicing;  
None of that shooting the sky (blank  
cartridge),

Nor a civic guard, all plumes and  
lacquer,

Hunting Radetzky's soul like a partridge  
Over Morello with squib and cracker.

This time we'll shoot better game and  
bag 'em hot —

No mere display at the stone of Dante.  
But a kind of sober Witanagemot

(Ex: "Casa Guidi," *quod videas ante*)  
Shall ponder, once Freedom restored to  
Florence,

How Art may return that departed  
with her.

Go, hated house, go each trace of the  
Lorraine's,

And bring us the days of Orgagna  
hither!

How we shall prologuize, how we shall  
perorate,

Utter fit things upon art and history,  
Feel truth at blood-heat and falsehood at  
zero rate,

Make of the want of the age no mys-  
tery;

Contrast the fructuous and sterile eras,  
Show — monarchy ever its uncouth cub  
licks

Out of the bear's shape into Chimæra's,  
While Pure Art's birth is still the  
republic's.

Then one shall propose in a speech (curt  
Tuscan.

Expurgate and sober, with scarcely an  
"*issimo*,")

To end now our half-told tale of Cam-  
buscan,

And turn the bell-tower's *alt* to *altis-  
simo*:

And fine as the beak of a young beccaccia  
The Campanile, the Duomo's fit ally,  
Shall soar up in gold full fifty braccia,  
Completing Florence, as Florence Italy

Shall I be alive that morning the scaf-  
fold

Is broken away, and the long-pent  
fire,

Like the golden hope of the world, un-  
baffled

Springs from its sleep, and up goes the  
spire

While "God and the People" plain for its  
motto,

Thence the new tricolor flaps at the  
sky?

At least to foresee that glory of Giotto  
And Florence together, the first am I!

## "DE GUSTIBUS —"

YOUR ghost will walk, you lover of trees,  
 (If our loves remain)  
 In an English lane,  
 By a cornfield-side a-flutter with poppies.  
 Hark, those two in the hazel coppice —  
 A boy and a girl, if the good fates please,  
 Making love, say, —  
 The happier they!  
 Draw yourself up from the light of the  
 moon,  
 And let them pass, as they will too soon.  
 With the beanflowers' boon,  
 And the blackbird's tune,  
 And May, and June!

What I love best in all the world  
 Is a castle, precipice-encurled,  
 In a gash of the wind-grieved Apennine.  
 Or look for me, old fellow of mine,  
 (If I get my head from out the mouth  
 O' the grave, and loose my spirit's  
 bands,  
 And come again to the land of lands) —  
 In a sea-side house to the farther South,  
 Where the baked cicala dies of drouth,  
 And one sharp tree — 'tis a cypress —  
 stands  
 By the many hundred years red-rusted,  
 Rough iron-spiked, ripe fruit-o'ercrusted,  
 My sentinel to guard the sands  
 To the water's edge. For, what expands  
 Before the house, but the great opaque  
 Blue breadth of sea without a break?  
 While, in the house, forever crumbles  
 Some fragment of the frescoed walls.  
 From blisters where a scorpion sprawls.  
 A girl bare-footed brings, and tumbles  
 Down on the pavement, green-flesh  
 melons,  
 And says there's news to-day — the  
 king  
 Was shot at, touched in the liver-wing,  
 Goes with his Bourbon arm in a sling,  
 — She hopes they have not caught the  
 felons.  
 Italy, my Italy!  
 Queen Mary's saying serves for me —  
 (When fortune's malice  
 Lost her, Calais)  
 Open my heart and you will see  
 Graved inside of it, "Italy."  
 Such lovers old are I and she:  
 So it always was, so shall ever be!

1855.

## MY STAR

ALL that I know  
 Of a certain star  
 Is, it can throw  
 (Like the angled spar)  
 Now a dart of red,  
 Now a dart of blue;  
 Till my friends have said  
 They would fain see, too,  
 My star that dartles the red and the blue!  
 Then it stops like a bird; like a flower,  
 hangs furled:  
 They must solace themselves with the  
 Saturn above it.  
 What matter to me if their star is a world?  
 Mine has opened its soul to me; there-  
 fore I love it. 1855.

## ANY WIFE TO ANY HUSBAND

My love, this is the bitterest, that thou —  
 Who art all truth, and who dost love me  
 now  
 As thine eyes say, as thy voice breaks  
 to say —  
 Shouldst love so truly, and couldst love  
 me still  
 A whole long life through, had but love  
 its will,  
 Would death that leads me from thee  
 brook delay.  
 I have but to be by thee, and thy hand  
 Will never let mine go, nor heart with-  
 stand  
 The beating of my heart to reach its  
 place.  
 When shall I look for thee and feel thee  
 gone?  
 When cry for the old comfort and find  
 none?  
 Never, I know! Thy soul is in thy  
 face.

Oh, I should fade — 'tis willed so!  
 Might I save,  
 Gladly I would, whatever beauty gave  
 Joy to thy sense, for that was precious  
 too.  
 It is not to be granted. But the soul  
 Whence the love comes, all ravage leaves  
 that whole;  
 Vainly the flesh fades; soul makes all  
 things new.

It would not be because my eye grew  
dim  
Thou couldst not find the love there,  
thanks to Him

Who never is dishonored in the spark  
He gave us from his fire of fires and  
bade

Remember whence it sprang, nor be  
afraid

While that burns on, though all the  
rest grow dark.

So, how thou wouldst be perfect, white  
and clean

Outside as inside, soul and soul's demesne

Alike, this body given to show it by!  
Oh, three-parts through the worst of  
life's abyss,

What plaudits from the next world after  
this,

Couldst thou repeat a stroke and gain  
the sky! —

And is it not the bitterer to think

That disengage our hands and thou wilt  
sink

Although thy love was love in very  
deed?

I know that nature! Pass a festive day,  
Thou dost not throw its relic-flower away  
Nor bid its music's loitering echo  
speed.

Thou let'st the stranger's glove lie where  
it fell;

If old things remain old things all is  
well,

For thou art grateful as becomes man  
best:

And hadst thou only heard me play one  
tune,

Or viewed me from a window, not so  
soon

With thee would such things fade as  
with the rest.

I seem to see! We meet and part; 'tis  
brief;

The book I opened keeps a folded leaf,  
The very chair I sat on, breaks the  
rank;

That is a portrait of me on the wall —  
Three lines, my face comes at so slight a  
call:

And for all this, one little hour to  
thank!

But now, because the hour through years  
was fixed,

Because our inmost beings met and  
mixed,

Because thou once hast loved me —  
wilt thou dare

Say to thy soul and Who may list  
beside,

"Therefore she is immortally my bride;  
Chance cannot change my love, nor  
time impair.

"So, what if in the dusk of life that's  
left,

I, a tired traveller of my sun bereft,

Look from my path when, mimicking  
the same,

The firefly glimpses past me, come and  
gone?

— Where was it till the sunset? Where  
anon

It will be at the sunrise! What's to  
blame?"

Is it so helpful to thee? Canst thou  
take

The mimic up, nor, for the true thing's  
sake,

Put gently by such efforts at a beam?

Is the remainder of the way so long,  
Thou need'st the little solace, thou the  
strong?

Watch out thy watch, let weak ones  
doze and dream!

Ah, but the fresher faces! "Is it true,"  
Thou'lt ask, "some eyes are beautiful  
and new?"

Some hair, — how can one choose but  
grasp such wealth?

And if a man would press his lips to lips  
Fresh as the wilding hedge-rose-cup there  
slips

The dewdrop out of, must it be by  
stealth?

"It cannot change the love still kept for  
Her,

More than if such a picture I prefer  
Passing a day with, to a room's bare  
side:

The painted form takes nothing she  
possessed,

Yet, while the Titian's Venus lies at rest,  
A man looks. Once more, what is  
there to chide?"

So must I see, from where I sit and watch,  
My own self sell myself, my hand attach  
Its warrant to the very thefts from  
me —

Thy singleness of soul that made me  
proud,

Thy purity of heart I loved aloud,  
Thy man's-truth I was bold to bid God  
see!

Love so, then, if thou wilt! Give all thou  
canst

Away to the new faces — disentranced,  
(Say it and think it) obdurate no more;  
Re-issue looks and words from the old  
mint,

Pass them afresh, no matter whose the  
print

Image and superscription once they  
bore!

Re-coin thyself and give it them to  
spend, —

It all comes to the same thing at the  
end,

Since mine thou wast, mine art and  
mine shalt be,

Faithful or faithless, sealing up the sum  
Or lavish of my treasure, thou must come  
Back to the heart's place here I keep  
for thee!

Only, why should it be with stain at all?  
Why must I, 'twixt the leaves of coronal,

Put any kiss of pardon on thy brow?  
Why need the other women know so  
much,

And talk together, "Such the look and  
such

The smile he used to love with, then as  
now!"

Might I die last and show thee! Should  
I find

Such hardship in the few years left behind,  
If free to take and light my lamp, and  
go

Into thy tomb, and shut the door and sit,  
Seeing thy face on those four sides of it

The better that they are so blank, I  
know!

Why, time was what I wanted, to turn  
o'er

Within my mind each look, get more and  
more

By heart each word, too much to learn  
at first:

And join thee all the fitter for the pause  
'Neath the low doorway's lintel. That  
were cause

For lingering, though thou calledst, if  
I durst!

And yet thou art the nobler of us two:  
What dare I dream of, that thou canst  
not do,

Outstripping my ten small steps with  
one stride?

I'll say then, here's a trial and a task —  
Is it to bear? — if easy, I'll not ask:

Though love fail, I can trust on in thy  
pride.

Pride? — when those eyes forestall the  
life behind

The death I have to go through! — when  
I find,

Now that I want thy help most, all  
of thee!

What did I fear? Thy love shall hold me  
fast

Until the little minute's sleep is past  
And I wake saved. — And yet it will  
not be!

1855.

## TWO IN THE CAMPAGNA

I WONDER do you feel to-day

As I have felt since, hand in hand,  
We sat down on the grass, to stray

In spirit better through the land,  
This morn of Rome and May?

For me, I touched a thought, I know,

Has tantalized me many times,  
(Like turns of thread the spiders throw

Mocking across our path) for rhymes  
To catch at and let go.

Help me to hold it! First it left

The yellowing fennel, run to seed  
There, branching from the brickwork's  
cleft,

Some old tomb's ruin; yonder weed  
Took up the floating weft,

Where one small orange cup amassed

Five beetles — blind and green they  
grobe

Among the honey-meal: and last,

Everywhere on the grassy slope  
I traced it. Hold it fast!

The champaign with its endless fleece  
 Of feathery grasses everywhere!  
 Silence and passion, joy and peace,  
 An everlasting wash of air —  
 Rome's ghost since her decease.

Such life here, through such length of  
 hours,  
 Such miracles performed in play,  
 Such primal naked forms of flowers,  
 Such letting nature have her way,  
 While heaven looks from its towers!

How say you? Let us, O my dove,  
 Let us be unashamed of soul,  
 As earth lies bare to heaven above!  
 How is it under our control  
 To love or not to love?

I would that you were all to me,  
 You that are just so much, no more.  
 Not yours nor mine, nor slave nor  
 free!  
 Where does the fault lie? What the  
 core  
 O' the wound, since wound must be?

I would I could adopt your will,  
 See with your eyes, and set my heart  
 Beating by yours, and drink my fill  
 At your soul's springs, — your part my  
 part  
 In life, for good and ill.

No, I yearn upward, touch you close,  
 Then stand away. I kiss your cheek,  
 Catch your soul's warmth, — I pluck the  
 rose  
 And love it more than tongue can  
 speak —  
 Then the good minute goes.

Already how am I so far  
 Out of that minute? Must I go  
 Still like the thistle-ball, no bar,  
 Onward, whenever light winds blow,  
 Fixed by no friendly star?

Just when I seemed about to learn!  
 Where is the thread now? Off again!  
 The old trick! Only I discern —  
 Infinite passion, and the pain  
 Of finite hearts that yearn.

1855.

## MISCONCEPTIONS

THIS is a spray the Bird clung to,  
 Making it blossom with pleasure,  
 Ere the high tree-top she sprung to,  
 Fit for her nest and her treasure.  
 Oh, what a hope beyond measure  
 Was the poor spray's, which the flying  
 feet hung to, —  
 So to be singled out, built in, and sung to!

This is a heart the Queen leaned on,  
 Thrilled in a minute erratic,  
 Ere the true bosom she bent on,  
 Meet for love's regal dalmatic.  
 Oh, what a fancy ecstatic  
 Was the poor heart's, ere the wanderer  
 went on —  
 Love to be saved for it, proffered to,  
 spent on! 1855.

## ONE WAY OF LOVE

ALL June I bound the rose in sheaves.  
 Now, rose by rose, I strip the leaves  
 And strew them where Pauline may pass.  
 She will not turn aside? Alas!  
 Let them lie. Suppose they die?  
 The chance was they might take her eye.

How many a month I strove to suit  
 These stubborn fingers to the lute!  
 To-day I venture all I know.  
 She will not hear my music? So!  
 Break the string; fold music's wing:  
 Suppose Pauline had bade me sing!

My whole life long I learned to love.  
 This hour my utmost art I prove  
 And speak my passion — heaven or hell?  
 She will not give me heaven? 'Tis well!  
 Lose who may — I still can say,  
 Those who win heaven, blest are they!  
 1855.

## ANOTHER WAY OF LOVE

JUNE was not over  
 Though past the full,  
 And the best of her roses  
 Had yet to blow,  
 When a man I know  
 (But shall not discover,  
 Since ears are dull,  
 And time discloses)



Turned him and said with a man's true  
 air,  
 Half sighing a smile in a yawn, as  
 'twere, —  
 "If I tire of your June, will she greatly  
 care?"

Well, dear, in-doors with you!  
 True! serene deadness  
 Tries a man's temper.  
 What's in the blossom  
 June wears on her bosom?  
 Can it clear scores with you?  
 Sweetness and redness,  
*Eadem semper!*  
 Go, let me care for it greatly or slightly!  
 If June mend her bower now, your hand  
 left unsightly  
 By plucking the roses, — my June will  
 do rightly.

And after, for pastime,  
 If June is refulgent  
 With flowers in completeness,  
 All petals, no prickles,  
 Delicious as trickles  
 Of wine poured at mass-time, —  
 And chose One indulgent  
 To redness and sweetness:  
 Or if, with experience of man and of spider,  
 June use my June-lightning, the strong  
 insect-ridder,  
 And stop the fresh film-work, — why,  
 June will consider. 1855.

### RESPECTABILITY

DEAR, had the world in its caprice  
 Deigned to proclaim "I know you both,  
 Have recognized your plighted troth,  
 Am sponsor for you: live in peace!" —  
 How many precious months and years  
 Of youth had passed, that speed so fast,  
 Before we found it out at last,  
 The world, and what it fears!

How much of priceless life were spent  
 With men that every virtue decks,  
 And women models of their sex,  
 Society's true ornament, —  
 Ere we dared wander, nights like this,  
 Through wind and rain, and watch the  
 Seine,  
 And feel the Boulevard break again  
 To warmth and light and bliss!

I know! the world proscribes not love;  
 Allows my finger to caress  
 Your lips' contour and downiness,  
 Provided it supply a glove.  
 The world's good word! — the Institute!  
 Guizot receives Montalembert!  
 Eh? Down the court three lampions  
 flare:  
 Put forward your best foot! 1855.

### LOVE IN A LIFE

ROOM after room,  
 I hunt the house through  
 We inhabit together.  
 Heart, fear nothing, for, heart, thou shalt  
 find her —  
 Next time, herself! — not the trouble be-  
 hind her  
 Left in the curtain, the couch's perfume!  
 As she brushed it, the cornice-wreath  
 blossomed anew:  
 Yon looking-glass gleamed at the wave  
 of her feather.

Yet the day wears,  
 And door succeeds door;  
 I try the fresh fortune —  
 Range the wide house from the wing to  
 the center.  
 Still the same chance! she goes out as I  
 enter.  
 Spend my whole day in the quest, —  
 who cares?  
 But 'tis twilight, you see, — with such  
 suites to explore,  
 Such closets to search, such alcoves to  
 importune! 1855.

### LIFE IN A LOVE

ESCAPE me?  
 Never —  
 Beloved!  
 While I am I, and you are you,  
 So long as the world contains us both,  
 Me the loving and you the loth,  
 While the one eludes, must the other  
 pursue.  
 My life is a fault at last, I fear:  
 It seems too much like a fate, indeed!  
 Though I do my best I shall scarce  
 succeed.  
 But what if I fail of my purpose here?

It is but to keep the nerves at strain,  
 To dry one's eyes and laugh at a fall,  
 And baffled, get up and begin again, —  
 So the chase takes up one's life, that's  
 all.

While, look but once from your farthest  
 bound

At me so deep in the dust and dark,  
 No sooner the old hope goes to ground  
 Than a new one, straight to the self-  
 same mark,

I shape me —  
 Ever

Removed! 1855.

### IN THREE DAYS

So, I shall see her in three days  
 And just one night, but nights are short,  
 Then two long hours, and that is morn.  
 See how I come, unchanged, unworn!  
 Feel, where my life broke off from thine,  
 How fresh the splinters keep and fine, —  
 Only a touch and we combine!

Too long, this time of year, the days!  
 But nights, at least the nights are short.  
 As night shows where her one moon is,  
 A hand's-breadth of pure light and bliss,  
 So life's night gives my lady birth  
 And my eyes hold her! What is worth  
 The rest of heaven, the rest of earth?

O loaded curls, release your store  
 Of warmth and scent, as once before  
 The tingling hair did, lights and darks  
 Outbreaking into fairy sparks,  
 When under curl and curl I pried  
 After the warmth and scent inside,  
 Through lights and darks how manifold —  
 The dark inspired, the light controlled!  
 As early Art embrowns the gold.

What great fear, should one say, "Three  
 days  
 That change the world might change as  
 well

Your fortune; and if joy delays,  
 Be happy that no worse befell!"  
 What small fear, if another says,  
 "Three days and one short night beside  
 May throw no shadow on your ways;  
 But years must teem with change untried,  
 With chance not easily defied,  
 With an end somewhere undescried."

No fear! — or if a fear be born  
 This minute, it dies out in scorn.  
 Fear? I shall see her in three days  
 And one night, now the nights are short,  
 Then just two hours, and that is morn.  
 1855.

### THE GUARDIAN-ANGEL

A PICTURE AT FANO

DEAR and great Angel, wouldst thou only  
 leave

That child, when thou hast done with  
 him, for me!

Let me sit all the day here, that when eve  
 Shall find performed thy special minis-  
 try,

And time come for departure, thou, sus-  
 pending

Thy flight, may'st see another child for  
 tending,

Another still, to quiet and retrieve.

Then I shall feel thee step one step no  
 more,

From where thou standest now to  
 where I gaze,

— And suddenly my head is covered o'er  
 With those wings, white above the  
 child who prays

Now on that tomb — and I shall feel thee  
 guarding

Me, out of all the world; for me, discarding  
 Yon heaven thy home, that waits and  
 opes its door.

I would not look up thither past thy head  
 Because the door opes, like that child,

I know,

For I should have thy gracious face in-  
 stead,

Thou bird of God! And wilt thou  
 bend me low

Like him, and lay, like his, my hands  
 together,

And lift them up to pray, and gently tether  
 Me, as thy lamb there, with thy gar-  
 ment's spread?

If this was ever granted, I would rest

My head beneath thine, while thy  
 healing hands

Close-covered both my eyes beside thy  
 breast,

Pressing the brain, which too much  
 thought expands,

Back to its proper size again, and smooth-  
ing  
Distortion down till every nerve had  
soothing,  
And all lay quiet, happy and sup-  
pressed.

How soon all worldly wrong would be  
repaired!  
I think how I should view the earth and  
skies

And sea, when once again my brow was  
bared

After thy healing, with such different  
eyes.

O world, as God has made it! All is  
beauty:

And knowing this, is love, and love is duty.  
What further may be sought for or  
declared?

Guercino drew this angel I saw teach  
(Alfred, dear friend!) — that little child  
to pray,

Holding the little hands up, each to each  
Pressed gently, — with his own head  
turned away

Over the earth where so much lay before  
him

Of work to do, though heaven was open-  
ing o'er him,  
And he was left at Fano by the beach.

We were at Fano, and three times we went  
To sit and see him in his chapel there,  
And drink his beauty to our soul's con-  
tent

— My angel with me too: and since I  
care

For dear Guercino's fame (to which in  
power

And glory comes this picture for a dower,  
Fraught with a pathos so magnifi-  
cent) —

And since he did not work thus earnestly  
At all times, and has else endured some  
wrong —

I took one thought his picture struck from  
me,

And spread it out, translating it to song.  
My love is here. Where are you, dear  
old friend?

How rolls the Wairoa at your World's far  
end?

This is Ancona, yonder is the sea.

1855.

## MEMORABILIA

Ah, did you once see Shelley plain,  
And did he stop and speak to you,  
And did you speak to him again?  
How strange it seems and new!

But you were living before that,  
And also you are living after;  
And the memory I started at —  
My starting moves your laughter!

I crossed a moor, with a name of its own  
And a certain use in the world no  
doubt,  
Yet a hand's-breadth of it shines alone  
'Mid the blank miles round about:

For there I picked up on the heather  
And there I put inside my breast  
A moulted feather, an eagle-feather!  
Well, I forget the rest. 1855.

## POPULARITY

STAND still, true poet that you are!  
I know you; let me try and draw you,  
Some night you'll fail us: when afar  
You rise, remember one man saw you,  
Knew you, and named a star!

My star, God's glow-worm! Why extend  
That loving hand of his which leads  
you,  
Yet locks you safe from end to end  
Of this dark world, unless he needs you,  
Just saves your light to spend?

His clenched hand shall unclothe at last,  
I know, and let out all the beauty:  
My poet holds the future fast,  
Accepts the coming ages' duty,  
Their present for this past.

That day the earth's feast-master's brow  
Shall clear, to God the chalice raising;  
"Others give best at first, but thou  
Forever set'st our table praising,  
Keep'st the good wine till now!"

Meantime, I'll draw you as you stand,  
With few or none to watch and wonder:  
I'll say — a fisher, on the sand  
By Tyre the old, with ocean-plunder,  
A netful, brought to land.

Who has not heard how Tyrian shells  
 Enclosed the blue, that dye of dyes  
 Whereof one drop worked miracles,  
 And colored like Astarte's eyes  
 Raw silk the merchant sells?

And each bystander of them all  
 Could criticise, and quote tradition  
 How depths of blue sublimed some pall  
 — To get which, pricked a king's am-  
 bition;  
 Worth sceptre, crown and ball.

Yet there's the dye, in that rough mesh,  
 The sea has only just o'er-whispered!  
 Like welkhs, each lip's beard dripping  
 fresh,  
 As if they still the water's lisp heard  
 Through foam the rock-weeds thresh.

Enough to furnish Solomon  
 Such hangings for his cedar-house,  
 That, when gold-robed he took the throne  
 In that abyss of blue, the Spouse  
 Might swear his presence shone

Most like the centre-spike of gold  
 Which burns deep in the bluebell's  
 womb  
 What time, with ardors manifold,  
 The bee goes singing to her groom,  
 Drunken and overbold.

Mere conchs! not fit for warp or woof!  
 Till cunning come to pound and squeeze  
 And clarify, — refine to proof  
 The liquor filtered by degrees,  
 While the world stands aloof.

And there's the extract, flaked and fine,  
 And priced and salable at last!  
 And Hobbs, Nobbs, Stokes and Nokes  
 combine  
 To paint the future from the past,  
 Put blue into their line.

Hobbs hints blue, — straight he turtle  
 eats:  
 Nobbs prints blue, — claret crowns his  
 cup:  
 Nokes outdares Stokes in azure feats, —  
 Both gorge. Who fished the murex  
 up?  
 What porridge had John Keats? <sup>1</sup> 1855.

<sup>1</sup> See Chesterton's *Life of Browning*, pp. 154-156.

## THE PATRIOT

## AN OLD STORY

It was roses, roses, all the way,  
 With myrtle mixed in my path like mad:  
 The house-roofs seemed to heave and sway,  
 The church-spires flamed, such flags  
 they had,  
 A year ago on this very day.

The air broke into a mist with bells,  
 The old walls rocked with the crowd  
 and cries.  
 Had I said, "Good folk, mere noise re-  
 pels —  
 But give me your sun from yonder  
 skies!"  
 They had answered, "And afterward,  
 what else?"

Alack, it was I who leaped at the sun  
 To give it my loving friends to keep!  
 Naught man could do, have I left undone:  
 And you see my harvest, what I reap  
 This very day, now a year is run.

There's nobody on the house-tops now —  
 Just a palsied few at the windows set;  
 For the best of the sight is, all allow,  
 At the Shambles' Gate — or, better yet,  
 By the very scaffold's foot, I trow.

I go in the rain, and, more than needs,  
 A rope cuts both my wrists behind;  
 And I think, by the feel, my forehead  
 bleeds,  
 For they fling, whoever has a mind,  
 Stones at me for my year's misdeeds.

Thus I entered, and thus I go!  
 In triumphs, people have dropped down  
 dead.  
 "Paid by the world, what dost thou owe  
 Me?" — God might question; now in-  
 stead,  
 'Tis God shall repay: I am safer so.  
1855.

## A LIGHT WOMAN

So far as our story approaches the end,  
 Which do you pity the most of us  
 three? —  
 My friend, or the mistress of my friend  
 With her wanton eyes, or me?

My friend was already too good to lose,  
 And seemed in the way of improvement yet,  
 When she crossed his path with her  
 hunting-noose,  
 And over him drew her net.

When I saw him tangled in her toils,  
 A shame, said I, if she adds just him  
 To her nine-and-ninety other spoils,  
 The hundredth for a whim!

And before my friend be wholly hers,  
 How easy to prove to him, I said,  
 An eagle's the game her pride prefers,  
 Though she snaps at a wren instead!

So, I gave her eyes my own eyes to take,  
 My hand sought hers as in earnest  
 need,  
 And round she turned for my noble sake,  
 And gave me herself indeed.

The eagle am I, with my fame in the  
 world,  
 The wren is he, with his maiden face.  
 — You look away and your lip is curled?  
 Patience, a moment's space!

For see, my friend goes shaking and  
 white;  
 He eyes me as the basilisk:  
 I have turned, it appears, his day to  
 night,  
 Eclipsing his sun's disk.

And I did it, he thinks, as a very thief:  
 "Though I love her — that, he compre-  
 hends —  
 One should master one's passions, (love,  
 in chief)  
 And be loyal to one's friends!"

And she, — she lies in my hand as tame  
 As a pear late basking over a wall;  
 Just a touch to try and off it came;  
 'Tis mine, — can I let it fall?

With no mind to eat it, that's the worst!  
 Were it thrown in the road, would the  
 case assist?  
 'Twas quenching a dozen blue-flies'  
 thirst  
 When I gave its stalk a twist,

And I, — what I seem to my friend, you  
 see:

What I soon shall seem to his love, you  
 guess:  
 What I seem to myself, do you ask of  
 me?  
 No hero, I confess.

'Tis an awkward thing to play with souls,  
 And matter enough to save one's own:  
 Yet think of my friend, and the burning  
 coals  
 He played with for bits of stone!

One likes to show the truth for the truth;  
 That the woman was light is very true:  
 But suppose she says, — Never mind that  
 youth,  
 What wrong have I done to you?

Well, anyhow, here the story stays,  
 So far at least as I understand;  
 And, Robert Browning, you writer of  
 plays,  
 Here's a subject made to your hand!  
 1855.

#### THE LAST RIDE TOGETHER

I SAID — Then dearest, since 'tis so,  
 Since now at length my fate I know,  
 Since nothing all my love avails,  
 Since all my life seemed meant for, fails,  
 Since this was written and needs must  
 be —

My whole heart rises up to bless  
 Your name in pride and thankfulness!  
 Take back the hope you gave, — I claim  
 Only a memory of the same,  
 — And this beside, if you will not blame,  
 Your leave for one more last ride with  
 me.

My mistress bent that brow of hers;  
 Those deep dark eyes where pride demurs  
 When pity would be softening through,  
 Fixed me a breathing-while or two  
 With life or death in the balance:  
 right!

The blood replenished me again;  
 My last thought was at least not vain:  
 I and my mistress, side by side  
 Shall be together, breathe and ride,  
 So, one day more am I deified.

Who knows but the world may end  
 to-night?



Hush! if you saw some western cloud  
All billowy-bosomed, over-bowed  
By many benedictions — sun's  
And moon's and evening-star's at once —

And so, you, looking and loving best,  
Conscious grew, your passion drew  
Cloud, sunset, moonrise, star-shine too,  
Down on you, near and yet more near.  
Till flesh must fade for heaven was  
here! —

Thus leant she and lingered — joy and  
fear!

Thus lay she a moment on my breast.

Then we began to ride. My soul  
Smoothed itself out, a long-cramped scroll  
Freshening and fluttering in the wind.  
Past hopes already lay behind.

What need to strive with a life awry?  
Had I said that, had I done this?  
So might I gain, so might I miss.  
Might she have loved me? just as well  
She might have hated, who can tell!  
Where had I been now if the worst  
befell?

And here we are riding, she and I.

Fail I alone, in words and deeds?  
Why, all men strive, and who succeeds?  
We rode; it seemed, my spirit flew,  
Saw other regions, cities new,  
As the world rushed by on either side.  
I thought, — All labor, yet no less  
Bear up beneath their unsuccess,  
Look at the end of work, contrast  
The petty done, the undone vast,  
This present of theirs with the hopeful  
past!

I hoped she would love me; here we  
ride.

What hand and brain went ever paired?  
What heart alike conceived and dared?  
What act proved all its thought had  
been?

What will but felt the fleshly screen?  
We ride and I see her bosom heave.  
There's many a crown for us who can  
reach.

Ten lines, a statesman's life in each!  
The flag stuck on a heap of bones,  
A soldier's doing! what atones?  
They scratch his name on the Abbey-  
stones.

My riding is better, by their leave.

What does it all mean, poet? Well,  
Your brains beat into rhythm, you tell  
What we felt only: you expressed  
You hold things beautiful the best,  
And place them in rhyme so, side by  
side.

'Tis something, nay 'tis much: but  
then,

Have you yourself what's best for men?  
Are you — poor, sick, old ere your time —  
Nearer one whit your own sublime  
Than we who never have turned a  
rhyme?

Sing, riding's a joy. For me, I ride.

And you, great sculptor — so, you gave  
A score of years to Art, her slave,  
And that's your Venus, whence we turn  
To yonder girl that fords the burn!

You acquiesce, and shall I repine?  
What, man of music, you grown gray  
With notes and nothing else to say,  
Is this your sole praise from a friend,  
"Greatly his opera's strains intend,  
But in music we know how fashions  
end!"

I gave my youth; but we ride, in fine.

Who knows what's fit for us? Had  
fate

Proposed bliss here should sublimate  
My being — had I signed the bond —  
Still one must lead some life beyond,  
Have a bliss to die with, dim-described.

This foot once planted on the goal,  
This glory-garland round my soul,  
Could I descry such? Try and test!  
I sink back shuddering from the quest.  
Earth being so good, would heaven seem  
best?

Now, heaven and she are beyond this  
ride.

And yet — she has not spoke so long!  
What if heaven be that, fair and strong  
At life's best, with our eyes upturned  
Whither life's flower is first discerned,  
We, fixed so, ever should so abide?

What if we still ride on, we two,  
With life forever old yet new,  
Changed not in kind but in degree,  
The instant made eternity, —  
And heaven just prove that I and she  
Ride, ride together, forever ride?

## A GRAMMARIAN'S FUNERAL

SHORTLY AFTER THE REVIVAL OF LEARN-  
ING IN EUROPE

LET us begin and carry up this corpse,  
Singing together.  
Leave we the common crofts, the vulgar  
thorpes  
Each in its tether  
Sleeping safe on the bosom of the plain,  
Cared-for till cock-crow:  
Look out if yonder be not day again  
Rimming the rock-row!  
That's the appropriate country; there,  
man's thought,  
Rarer, intenser,  
Self-gathered for an outbreak, as it ought,  
Chafes in the censer.  
Leave we the unlettered plain its herd  
and crop:  
Seek we sepulture  
On a tall mountain, citied to the top,  
Crowded with culture!  
All the peaks soar, but one the rest ex-  
cels;  
Clouds overcome it;  
No! yonder sparkle is the citadel's  
Circling its summit.  
Thither our path lies; wind we up the  
heights;  
Wait ye the warning?  
Our low life was the level's and the  
night's;  
He's for the morning.  
Step to a tune, square chests, erect each  
head,  
'Ware the beholders!  
This is our master, famous, calm and  
dead,  
Borne on our shoulders.  
Sleep, crop and herd! sleep, darkling  
thorpe and croft,  
Safe from the weather!  
He, whom we convoy to his grave aloft,  
Singing together,  
He was a man born with thy face and  
throat,  
Lyric Apollo!  
Long he lived nameless: how should  
Spring take note  
Winter would follow?  
Till lo, the little touch, and youth was  
gone!  
Cramped and diminished,

Moaned he, "New measures, other feet  
anon!  
My dance is finished?"  
No, that's the world's way: (keep the  
mountain-side,  
Make for the city!)  
He knew the signal, and stepped on with  
pride  
Over men's pity;  
Left play for work, and grappled with the  
world  
Bent on escaping:  
"What's in the scroll," quoth he, "thou  
keepest furled?  
Show me their shaping,  
Theirs who most studied man, the bard  
and sage, —  
Give!" — So, he gowned him,  
Straight got by heart that book to its last  
page:  
Learned, we found him.  
Yea, but we found him bald too, eyes like  
lead,  
Accents uncertain:  
"Time to taste life," another would have  
said,  
"Up with the curtain!"  
This man said rather, "Actual life comes  
next?  
Patience a moment!  
Grant I have mastered learning's crabbed  
text,  
Still there's the comment.  
Let me know all! Prate not of most or  
least,  
Painful or easy!  
Even to the crumbs I'd fain eat up the  
feast,  
Ay, nor feel queasy."  
Oh, such a life as he resolved to live,  
When he had learned it,  
When he had gathered all books had to  
give!  
Sooner, he spurned it.  
Image the whole, then execute the  
parts —  
Fancy the fabric  
Quite, ere you build, ere steel strike fire  
from quartz,  
Ere mortar dab brick!  
(Here's the town-gate reached: there's  
the market-place  
Gaping before us.)  
Yea, this in him was the peculiar grace  
(Hearten our chorus!)

That before living he'd learn how to live —

No end to learning :

Earn the means first — God surely will contrive

Use for our earning.

Others mistrust and say, "But time escapes :

Live now or never !"

He said, "What's time? Leave Now for dogs and apes !

Man has Forever."

Back to his book then : deeper drooped his head :

*Calculus* racked him :

Leaden before, his eyes grew dross of lead :

*Tussis* attacked him.

"Now, master, take a little rest !" — not he !

(Caution redoubled,

Step two abreast, the way winds narrowly !)

Not a whit troubled,

Back to his studies, fresher than at first, Fierce as a dragon

He (soul-hydroptic with a sacred thirst) Sucked at the flagon.

Oh, if we draw a circle premature,

Heedless of far gain,

Greedy for quick returns of profit, sure Bad is our bargain !

Was it not great? did not he throw on God,

(He loves the burthen) —

God's task to make the heavenly period Perfect the earthen?

Did not he magnify the mind, show clear Just what it all meant?

He would not discount life, as fools do here,

Paid by instalment.

He ventured neck or nothing — heaven's success

Found, or earth's failure :

"Wilt thou trust death or not?" He answered "Yes !

Hence with life's pale lure !"

That low man seeks a little thing to do, Sees it and does it :

This high man, with a great thing to pursue,

Dies ere he knows it.

That low man goes on adding one to one, His hundred's soon hit :

This high man, aiming at a million, Misses an unit.

That, has the world here — should he need the next,

Let the world mind him !

This, throws himself on God, and unperplexed

Seeking shall find him.

So, with the throttling hands of death at strife

Ground he at grammar ;

Still, through the rattle, parts of speech were rife :

While he could stammer

He settled *Hoti's* business — let it be ! —

Properly based *Oun* —

Gave us the doctrine of the enclitic *De*, Dead from the waist down.

Well, here's the platform, here's the proper place :

Hail to your purlieus,

All ye highfliers of the feathered race, Swallows and curlews !

Here's the top-peak ; the multitude below

Live, for they can, there :

This man decided not to Live but Know — Bury this man there?

Here — here's his place, where meteors shoot, clouds form,

Lightnings are loosened,

Stars come and go ! Let joy break with the storm,

Peace let the dew send !

Lofty designs must close in like effects : Loftily lying,

Leave him — still loftier than the world suspects,

Living and dying. 1855.

## THE STATUE AND THE BUST

THERE'S a palace in Florence, the world knows well,

And a statue watches it from the square.

And this story of both do our townsmen tell.

Ages ago, a lady there,  
At the farthest window facing the East  
Asked, "Who rides by with the royal air !"

The bridesmaids' prattle around her ceased ;

She leaned forth, one on either hand ;

They saw how the blush of the bride increased —

They felt by its beats her heart expand —  
As one at each ear and both in a breath  
Whispered, "The Great-Duke Ferdin-  
    nand."

That selfsame instant, underneath,  
The Duke rode past in his idle way,  
Empty and fine like a swordless sheath.

Gay he rode, with a friend as gay,  
Till he threw his head back — "Who is  
    she?"  
— "A bride the Riccardi brings home  
    to-day."

Hair in heaps lay heavily  
Over a pale brow spirit-pure —  
Carved like the heart of the coal-black  
    tree,

Crisped like a war steed's encloure —  
And vainly sought to dissemble her eyes  
Of the blackest black our eyes endure,

And lo, a blade for a knight's emprise  
Filled the fine empty sheath of a man, —  
The Duke grew straightway brave and  
    wise.

He looked at her as a lover can;  
She looked at him, as one who awakes:  
The past was a sleep, and her life began.

Now, love so ordered for both their sakes,  
A feast was held that selfsame night  
In the pile which the mighty shadow  
    makes.

(For Via Larga is three-parts light,  
But the palace overshadows one,  
Because of a crime, which may God re-  
    quite!

To Florence and God the wrong was done,  
Through the first republic's murder there  
By Cosimo and his cursed son.)

The Duke (with the statue's face in the  
    square)  
Turned in the midst of his multitude  
At the bright approach of the bridal pair.

Face to face the lovers stood  
A single minute and no more  
While the bridegroom bent as a man sub-  
    dued —

Bowed till his bonnet brushed the floor —  
For the Duke on the lady a kiss con-  
    ferred,  
As the courtly custom was of yore.

In a minute can lovers exchange a word?  
If a word did pass, which I do not think,  
Only one out of a thousand heard.

That was the bridegroom. At day's brink  
He and his bride were alone at last  
In a bed chamber by a taper's blink.

Calmly he said that her lot was cast,  
That the door she had passed was shut on  
    her  
Till the final catafalk repassed.

The world meanwhile, its noise and stir,  
Through a certain window facing the  
    East  
She could watch like a convent's chroni-  
    cler.

Since passing the door might lead to a  
    feast,  
And a feast might lead to so much beside,  
He, of many evils, chose the least.

"Freely I choose too," said the bride —  
"Your window and its world suffice,"  
Replied the tongue, while the heart  
    replied —

"If I spend the night with that devil  
    twice,  
May his window serve as my loop of hell  
Whence a damned soul looks on paradise!

"I fly to the Duke who loves me well,  
Sit by his side and laugh at sorrow  
Ere I count another ave-bell.

"'T is only the coat of a page to borrow,  
And tie my hair in a horse-boy's trim,  
And I save my soul — but not to-mor-  
    row —"

(She checked herself and her eye grew  
    dim)

"My father tarries to bless my state:  
I must keep it one day more for him.

"Is one day more so long to wait?  
Moreover the Duke rides past, I know;  
We shall see each other, sure as fate."

She turned on her side and slept. Just  
so!  
So we resolve on a thing and sleep:  
So did the lady, ages ago.

That night the Duke said, "Dear or cheap  
As the cost of this cup of bliss may prove  
To body or soul, I will drain it deep."

And on the morrow, bold with love,  
He beckoned the bridegroom (close on  
call,  
As his duty bade, by the Duke's alcove)

And smiled "'Twas a very funeral,  
Your lady will think, this feast of ours, —  
A shame to efface whate'er befall!

"What if we break from the Arno bowers,  
And try if Petraja, cool and green,  
Cure last night's faults with this morn-  
ing's flowers?"

The bridegroom, not a thought to be seen  
On his steady brow and quiet mouth,  
Said, "Too much favor for me so mean!

"But alas! my lady leaves the South;  
Each wind that comes from the Apennine  
Is a menace to her tender youth:

"Nor a way exists, the wise opine,  
If she quits her palace twice this year,  
To avert the flower of life's decline."

Quoth the Duke, "A sage and a kindly  
fear.  
Moreover Petraja is cold this spring:  
Be our feast to-night as usual here!"

And then to himself — "Which night  
shall bring  
Thy bride to her lover's embraces, fool —  
Or I am the fool, and thou art the king!

"Yet my passion must wait a night, nor  
cool —  
For to-night the Envoy arrives from  
France  
Whose heart I unlock with thyself, my  
tool.

"I need thee still and might miss per-  
chance.  
To-day is not wholly lost, beside,  
With its hope of my lady's countenance:

"For I ride — what should I do but ride?  
And passing her palace, if I list,  
May glance at its window — well betide!"

So said, so done: nor the lady missed  
One ray that broke from the ardent brow,  
Nor a curl of the lips where the spirit  
kissed.

Be sure that each renewed the vow,  
No morrow's sun should arise and set  
And leave them then as it left them now.

But next day passed, and next day yet,  
With still fresh cause to wait one day more  
Ere each leaped over the parapet.

And still, as love's brief morning wore,  
With a gentle start, half smile, half sigh,  
They found love not as it seemed before.

They thought it would work infallibly,  
But not in despite of heaven and earth:  
The rose would blow when the storm  
passed by.

Meantime they could profit in winter's  
dearth  
By store of fruits that supplant the rose:  
The world and its ways have a certain  
worth:

And to press a point while these oppose  
Were simple policy; better wait:  
We lose no friends and we gain no foes.

Meantime, worse fates than a lover's fate,  
Who daily may ride and pass and look  
Where his lady watches behind the grate!

And she — she watched the square like a  
book  
Holding one picture and only one,  
Which daily to find she undertook:

When the picture was reached the book  
was done,  
And she turned from the picture at night  
to scheme  
Of tearing it out for herself next sun.

So weeks grew months, years; gleam by  
gleam  
The glory dropped from their youth and  
love,  
And both perceived they had dreamed a  
dream;



Which hovered as dreams do, still above :  
But who can take a dream for a truth ?  
Oh, hide our eyes from the next remove !

One day as the lady saw her youth  
Depart, and the silver thread that  
    streaked  
Her hair, and, worn by the serpent's  
    tooth,

The brow so puckered, the chin so  
    peaked, —  
And wondered who the woman was,  
Hollowed-eyed and haggard-cheeked,

Fronting her silent in the glass —  
"Summon here," she suddenly said,  
"Before the rest of my old self pass,

"Him, the Carver, a hand to aid,  
Who fashions the clay no love will change,  
And fixes a beauty never to fade.

"Let Robbia's craft so apt and strange  
Arrest the remains of young and fair,  
And rivet them while the seasons range.

"Make me a face on the window there,  
Waiting as ever, mute the while,  
My love to pass below in the square !

"And let me think that it may beguile  
Dreary days which the dead must spend  
Down in their darkness under the aisle,

"To say, 'What matters it at the end ?  
I did no more while my heart was warm  
Than does that image, my pale-faced  
    friend.'

"Where is the use of the lip's red charm,  
The heaven of hair, the pride of the brow,  
And the blood that blues the inside arm —

"Unless we turn, as the soul knows how,  
The earthly gift to an end divine ?  
A lady of clay is as good, I trow."

But long ere Robbia's cornice, fine,  
With flowers and fruits which leaves en-  
    lace,  
Was set where now is the empty shrine —

(And, leaning out of a bright blue space,  
As a ghost might lean from a chink of sky,  
The passionate pale lady's face —

Eyeing ever, with earnest eye  
A quick-turned neck at its breathless  
    stretch,  
Some one who ever is passing by —)

The Duke had sighed like the simplest  
    wretch  
In Florence, "Youth — my dream es-  
    capes !  
Will its record stay ?" And he bade  
    them fetch

Some subtle moulder of brazen shapes —  
"Can the soul, the will, die out of a man  
Ere his body find the grave that gapes ?

"John of Douay shall effect my plan,  
Set me on horseback here aloft,  
Alive, as the crafty sculptor can,

"In the very square I have crossed so oft :  
That men may admire, when future suns  
Shall touch the eyes to a purpose soft,

"While the mouth and the brow stay  
    brave in bronze —  
Admire and say, 'When he was alive  
How he would take his pleasure once !'

"And it shall go hard but I contrive  
To listen the while, and laugh in my tomb  
At idleness which aspires to strive."

So ! While these wait the trump of  
    doom,  
How do their spirits pass, I wonder,  
Nights and days in the narrow room ?

Still, I suppose, they sit and ponder  
What a gift life was, ages ago,  
Six steps out of the chapel yonder.

Only they see not God, I know,  
Nor all that chivalry of his,  
The soldier-saints who, row on row,

Burn upward each to his point of bliss —  
Since, the end of life being manifest,  
He had burned his way through the world  
    to this.

I hear you reproach, "But delay was  
    best,  
For their end was a crime." — Oh, a  
    crime will do  
As well, I reply, to serve for a test,

As a virtue golden through and through,  
Sufficient to vindicate itself  
And prove its worth at a moment's view!

Must a game be played for the sake of pelf?  
Where a button goes, 'twere an epigram  
To offer the stamp of the very Guelph.

The true has no value beyond the sham;  
As well the counter as coin, I submit,  
When your table's a hat, and your prize,  
a dram.

Stake your counter as boldly every whit,  
Venture as warily, use the same skill,  
Do your best, whether winning or losing it,

If you choose to play! — is my principle.  
Let a man contend to the uttermost  
For his life's set prize, be it what it will!

The counter our lovers staked was lost  
As surely as if it were lawful coin:  
And the sin I impute to each frustrate  
ghost

Is — the unlit lamp and the ungirt loin,  
Though the end in sight was a vice, I say.  
You of the virtue (we issue join)  
How strive you? *De te, fabula!* 1855.

# "CHILDE ROLAND TO THE DARK TOWER CAME"

(See *Edgar's song* in *LEAR*)

My first thought was, he lied in every  
word,

That hoary cripple, with malicious eye  
Askance to watch the working of his lie  
On mine, and mouth scarce able to afford  
Suppression of the glee, that pursed and  
scored

Its edge, at one more victim gained  
thereby.

What else should he be set for, with his  
staff?

What, save to waylay with his lies,  
ensnare

All travellers who might find him  
posted there,

And ask the road? I guessed what  
skull-like laugh

Would break, what crutch 'gin write my  
epitaph

For pastime in the dusty thoroughfare,

If at his counsel I should turn aside  
Into that ominous tract which, all  
agree,

Hides the Dark Tower. Yet acquies-  
cingly

I did turn as he pointed: neither pride  
Nor hope rekindling at the end described,  
So much as gladness that some end  
might be.

For, what with my whole world-wide  
wandering,

What with my search drawn out  
through years, my hope

Dwindled into a ghost not fit to cope  
With that obstreperous joy success  
would bring, —

I hardly tried now to rebuke the spring  
My heart made, finding failure in its  
scope.

As when a sick man very near to death  
Seems dead indeed, and feels begin and  
end

The tears, and takes the farewell of  
each friend,

And hears one bid the other go, draw  
breath

Freelier outside, ("since all is o'er," he  
saith,

"And the blow fallen no grieving can  
amend;")

While some discuss if near the other  
graves

Be room enough for this, and when a day  
Suits best for carrying the corpse away,  
With care about the banners, scarves and  
staves:

And still the man hears all, and only  
craves

He may not shame such tender love and  
stay.

Thus, I had so long suffered in this quest,  
Heard failure prophesied so oft, been  
writ

So many times among "The Band" —  
to wit,

The knights who to the Dark Tower's  
search addressed

Their steps — that just to fail as they,  
seemed best,

And all the doubt was now — should I  
be fit?

So, quiet as despair, I turned from him,  
That hateful cripple, out of his high-  
way

Into the path he pointed. All the day  
Had been a dreary one at best, and dim  
Was settling to its close, yet shot one  
grim

Red leer to see the plain catch its  
estrays.

For mark! no sooner was I fairly found  
Pledged to the plain, after a pace or  
two,

Than, pausing to throw backward a  
last view

O'er the safe road, 'twas gone; gray  
plain all round:

Nothing but plain to the horizon's bound.  
I might go on; naught else remained to  
do.

So, on I went, I think I never saw  
Such starved ignoble nature; nothing  
throve:

For flowers — as well expect a cedar  
grove!

But cockle, spurge, according to their  
law

Might propagate their kind, with none to  
awe,

You'd think: a burr had been a treas-  
ure trove.

No! penury, inertness and grimace,  
In some strange sort, were the land's  
portion. "See

Or shut your eyes," said Nature peev-  
ishly,

"It nothing skills: I cannot help my  
case:

'Tis the Last Judgment's fire must cure  
this place,

Calcine its clods and set my prisoners  
free."

If there pushed any ragged thistle-stalk  
Above its mates, the head was chopped;  
the bents

Were jealous else. What made those  
holes and rents

In the dock's harsh swarth leaves,  
bruised as to balk

All hope of greenness? 'tis a brute must  
walk

Pashing their life out, with a brute's  
intent.

As for the grass, it grew as scant as hair  
In leprosy; thin dry blades pricked the  
mud

Which underneath looked kneaded up  
with blood.

One stiff blind horse, his every bone  
a-stare,

Stood stupefied, however he came there:  
Thrust out past service from the  
devil's stud!

Alive? he might be dead for aught I  
know,

With that red gaunt and colloped neck  
a-strain,

And shut eyes underneath the rusty  
mane;

Seldom went such grotesqueness with  
such woe;

I never saw a brute I hated so;  
He must be wicked to deserve such  
pain.

I shut my eyes and turned them on my  
heart,

As a man calls for wine before he fights,  
I asked one draught of earlier, happier  
sights,

Ere fitly I could hope to play my part.  
Think first, fight afterwards — the sol-  
dier's art:

One taste of the old time sets all to  
rights.

Not it! I fancied Cuthbert's reddening  
face

Beneath its garniture of curly gold,  
Dear fellow, till I almost felt him fold

An arm in mine to fix me to the place,  
That way he used. Alas, one night's  
disgrace!

Out went my heart's new fire and left  
it cold.

Giles then, the soul of honor — there he  
stands

Frank as ten years ago when knighted  
first.

What honest man should dare (he said)  
he durst.

Good — but the scene shifts — faugh!  
what hangman hands

Pin to his breast a parchment? His own  
bands

Read it. Poor traitor, spit upon and  
curst!

Better this present than a past like that;  
Back therefore to my darkening path  
again!

No sound, no sight as far as eye could  
strain.

Will the night send a howlet or a bat?

I asked: when something on the dismal  
flat

Came to arrest my thoughts and  
change their train.

A sudden little river crossed my path

As unexpected as a serpent comes.

No sluggish tide congenial to the  
glooms;

This, as it frothed by, might have been a  
bath

For the fiend's glowing hoof — to see the  
wrath

Of its black eddy bespate with flakes  
and spumes.

So petty, yet so spiteful! All along,

Low scrubby alders kneeled down over  
it;

Drenched willows flung them headlong  
in a fit

Of mute despair, a suicidal throng:

The river which had done them all the  
wrong,

Whate'er that was, rolled by, deterred  
no whit.

Which, while I forded, — good saints,  
how I feared

To set my foot upon a dead man's  
cheek,

Each step, or feel the spear I thrust to  
seek

For hollows, tangled in his hair or  
beard!

— It may have been a water-rat I speared,  
But, ugh, it sounded like a baby's  
shriek.

Glad was I when I reached the other  
bank.

Now for a better country. Vain  
presage!

Who were the strugglers, what war did  
they wage,

Whose savage trample thus could pad the  
dank

Soil to a plash? Toads in a poisoned  
tank,

Or wild cats in a red-hot iron cage —

The fight must so have seemed in that fell  
cirque.

What penned them there, with all the  
plain to choose?

No footprint leading to that horrid  
mews,

None out of it. Mad brewage set to work  
Their brains, no doubt, like galley-slaves  
the Turk

Pits for his pastime, Christians against  
Jews.

And more than that — a furlong on —  
why, there!

What bad use was that engine for, that  
wheel,

Or brake, not wheel — that harrow fit  
to reel

Men's bodies out like silk? with all the air  
Of Tophet's tool, on earth left unaware.

Or brought to sharpen its rusty teeth of  
steel.

Then came a bit of stubbed ground, once  
a wood,

Next a marsh, it would seem, and now  
mere earth

Desperate and done with: (so a fool  
finds mirth,

Makes a thing and then mars it, till his  
mood

Changes and off he goes!) within a rood —  
Bog, clay and rubble, sand and stark  
black dearth.

Now blotches rankling, colored gay and  
grim,

Now patches where some leanness of  
the soil's

Broke into moss or substances like boils;

Then came some palsied oak, a cleft in him  
Like a distorted mouth that splits its rim

Gaping at death, and dies while it  
recoils.

And just as far as ever from the end!

Naught in the distance but the evening,  
naught

To point my footstep further! At the  
thought,

A great black bird, Apollyon's bosom-  
friend,

Sailed past, nor beat his wide wing  
dragon-penned

That brushed my cap — perchance the  
guide I sought.

For, looking up, aware I somehow grew,  
 'Spite of the dusk, the plain had given  
 place  
 All round to mountains — with such  
 name to grace  
 Mere ugly heights and heaps now stolen  
 in view.  
 How thus they had surprised me, —  
 solve it, you!  
 How to get from them was no clearer  
 case.

Yet half I seemed to recognize some trick  
 Of mischief happened to me, God  
 knows when —  
 In a bad dream perhaps. Here ended,  
 then,  
 Progress this way. When, in the very  
 nick  
 Of giving up, one time more, came a click  
 As when a trap shuts — you're inside  
 the den!

Burningly it came on me all at once,  
 This was the place! those two hills on  
 the right,  
 Crouched like two bulls locked horn in  
 horn in fight;  
 While to the left, a tall scalped mountain  
 . . . Dunce,  
 Dotard, a-dozing at the very nonce,  
 After a life spent training for the sight!

What in the midst lay but the Tower  
 itself?  
 The round squat turret, blind as the  
 fool's heart,  
 Built of brown stone, without a coun-  
 terpart  
 In the whole world. The tempest's  
 mocking elf  
 Points to the shipman thus the unseen  
 self  
 He strikes on, only when the timbers  
 start.

Not see? because of night perhaps? —  
 why, day  
 Came back again for that! before it left  
 The dying sunset kindled through a  
 cleft:  
 The hills, like giants at a hunting, lay,  
 Chin upon hand, to see the game at  
 bay, —  
 "Now stab and end the creature — to  
 the heft!"

Not hear? when noise was everywhere!  
 it tolled  
 Increasing like a bell. Names in my  
 ears,  
 Of all the lost adventurers my peers, —  
 How such a one was strong, and such was  
 bold,  
 And such was fortunate, yet each of old  
 Lost, lost! one moment knelled the  
 woe of years.

There they stood, ranged along the hill-  
 sides, met  
 To view the last of me, a living frame  
 For one more picture! in a sheet of  
 flame  
 I saw them and I knew them all. And yet  
 Dauntless the slug-horn to my lips I set,  
 And blew: "*Childe Roland to the Dark  
 Tower came.*" 1855.

## FRA LIPPO LIPPI

I AM poor brother Lippo, by your leave!  
 You need not clap your torches to my  
 face.  
 Zooks, what's to blame? you think you  
 see a monk!  
 What, 'tis past midnight, and you go the  
 rounds,  
 And here you catch me at an alley's end  
 Where sportive ladies leave their doors  
 ajar?  
 The Carmine's my cloister: hunt it up,  
 Do, — harry out, if you must show your  
 zeal,  
 Whatever rat, there, haps on his wrong  
 hole,  
 And nip each softling of a wee white  
 mouse,  
*Weke, weke*, that's crept to keep him  
 company!  
 Aha, you know your betters! Then,  
 you'll take  
 Your hand away that's fiddling on my  
 throat.  
 And please to know me likewise. Who  
 am I?  
 Why, one, sir, who is lodging with a  
 friend  
 Three streets off — he's a certain . . .  
 how d'ye call?  
 Master — a . . . Cosimo of the Medici.  
 I' the house that caps the corner. Boh!  
 you were best!



Remember and tell me, the day you're  
 hanged,  
 How you affected such a gullet's-gripe!  
 But you, sir, it concerns you that your  
 knaves  
 Pick up a manner nor discredit you:  
 Zooks, are we pilchards, that they sweep  
 the streets  
 And count fair prize what comes into  
 their net?  
 He's Judas to a tittle, that man is!  
 Just such a face! Why, sir, you make  
 amends.  
 Lord, I'm not angry! Bid your hang-  
 dogs go  
 Drink out this quarter-florin to the health  
 Of the munificent House that harbors me  
 (And many more beside, lads! more  
 beside!)

And all's come square again. I'd like  
 his face —  
 His, elbowing on his comrade in this door  
 With the pike and lantern, — for the  
 slave that holds  
 John Baptist's head a-dangle by the hair  
 With one hand ("Look you, now," as  
 who should say)  
 And his weapon in the other, yet un-  
 wiped!  
 It's not your chance to have a bit of  
 chalk,  
 A wood-coal or the like? or you should  
 see!  
 Yes, I'm the painter, since you style me so.  
 What, brother Lippo's doings, up and  
 down  
 You know them and they take you? like  
 enough!  
 I saw the proper twinkle in your eye —  
 'Tell you, I liked your looks at very first.  
 Let's sit and set things straight now, hip  
 to haunch.  
 Here's spring come, and the nights one  
 makes up bands  
 To roam the town and sing our carnival,  
 And I've been three weeks shut within  
 my mew,  
 A-painting for the great man, saints and  
 saints  
 And saints again. I could not paint all  
 night —  
 Ouf! I leaned out of window for fresh  
 air.  
 There came a hurry of feet and little feet,  
 A sweep of lute strings, laughs, and  
 whiffs of song, —

*Flower o' the broom,  
 Take away love, and our earth is a tomb!  
 Flower o' the quince,  
 I let Lisa go, and what good in life since?  
 Flower o' the thyme — and so on. Round  
 they went.*

Scarce had they turned the corner when a  
 titter  
 Like the skipping of rabbits by moon-  
 light, — three slim shapes,  
 And a face that looked up . . . zooks,  
 sir, flesh and blood,  
 That's all I'm made of! Into shreds it  
 went,  
 Curtain and counterpane and coverlet,  
 All the bed-furniture — a dozen knots,  
 There was a ladder! Down I let myself,  
 Hands and feet, scrambling somehow, and  
 so dropped,  
 And after them. I came up with the fun  
 Hard by Saint Laurence, hail fellow, well  
 met, —

*Flower o' the rose,  
 If I've been merry, what matter who knows?  
 And so as I was stealing back again  
 To get to bed and have a bit of sleep  
 Ere I rise up to-morrow and go work  
 On Jerome knocking at his poor old  
 breast*

With his great round stone to subdue the  
 flesh,  
 You snap me of the sudden. Ah, I see!  
 Though your eye twinkles still, you shake  
 your head —  
 Mine's shaved — a monk, you say — the  
 sting's in that!

If Master Cosimo announced himself,  
 Mum's the word naturally; but a monk!  
 Come, what am I a beast for? tell us,  
 now!

I was a baby when my mother died  
 And father died and left me in the street.  
 I starved there, God knows how, a year or  
 two  
 On fig-skins, melon-parings, rinds and  
 shucks,  
 Refuse and rubbish. One fine frosty day,  
 My stomach being empty as your hat,  
 The wind doubled me up and down I  
 went.  
 Old Aunt Lapaccia trussed me with one  
 hand,  
 (Its fellow was a stinger as I knew)  
 And so along the wall, over the bridge,  
 By the straight cut to the convent. Six  
 words there,

While I stood munching my first bread  
that month :

"So, boy, you're minded," quoth the  
good fat father,

Wiping his own mouth, 'twas refection-  
time, —

"To quit this very miserable world?

Will you renounce" . . . "the mouthful  
of bread?" thought I;

By no means! Brief, they made a monk  
of me;

I did renounce the world, its pride and  
greed,

Palace, farm, villa, shop, and banking-  
house,

Trash, such as these poor devils of Medici  
Have given their hearts to — all at eight  
years old.

Well, sir, I found in time, you may be  
sure,

'Twas not for nothing — the good belly-  
ful,

The warm serge and the rope that goes all  
round,

And day-long blessed idleness beside!

"Let's see what the urchin's fit for"  
— that came next.

Not overmuch their way, I must confess.

Such a to-do! They tried me with their  
books;

Lord, they'd have taught me Latin in  
pure waste!

*Flower o' the clove,*

*All the Latin I construe is "amo" I love!*

But, mind you, when a boy starves in the  
streets

Eight years together, as my fortune was,  
Watching folk's faces to know who will  
fling

The bit of half-stripped grape-bunch he  
desires.

And who will curse or kick him for his  
pains, —

Which gentleman processional and fine,

Holding a candle to the Sacrament,

Will wink and let him lift a plate and  
catch

The droppings of the wax to sell again,

Or holla for the Eight and have him  
whipped, —

How say I? — nay, which dog bites,  
which lets drop

His bone from the heap of offal in the  
street, —

Why, soul and sense of him grow sharp  
alike,

He learns the look of things, and none the  
less

For admonition from the hunger-pinch.

I had a store of such remarks, be sure,

Which, after I found leisure, turned to  
use.

I drew men's faces on my copy-books,

Scrawled them within the antiphony's  
marge,

Joined legs and arms to the long music-  
notes,

Found eyes and nose and chin for A's and  
B's,

And made a string of pictures of the  
world

Betwixt the ins and outs of verb and  
noun,

On the wall, the bench, the door. The  
monks looked black.

"Nay," quoth the Prior, "turn him out,  
d'ye say?

In no wise. Lose a crow and catch a lark.

What if at last we get our man of parts,  
We Carmelites, like those Camaldolese

And Preaching Friars, to do our church up  
fine

And put the front on it that ought to be!"  
And hereupon he bade me daub away.

Thank you! my head being crammed,  
the walls a blank,

Never was such prompt disburdening.  
First, every sort of monk, the black and  
white,

I drew them, fat and lean: then, folk at  
church,

From good old gossips waiting to confess  
Their cribs of barrel-droppings, candle-  
ends, —

To the breathless fellow at the altar-foot,  
Fresh from his murder, safe and sitting  
there

With the little children round him in a  
row

Of admiration, half for his beard and half  
For that white anger of his victim's son

Shaking a fist at him with one fierce arm.  
Signing himself with the other because of  
Christ

(Whose sad face on the cross sees only  
this

After the passion of a thousand years)  
Till some poor girl, her apron o'er her  
head,

(Which the intense eyes looked through)  
came at eve

On tiptoe, said a word, dropped in a loaf.

Her pair of earrings and a bunch of  
 flowers  
 (The brute took growling), prayed, and  
 so was gone.  
 I painted all, then cried "'Tis ask and  
 have;  
 Choose, for more 's ready!" — laid the  
 ladder flat,  
 And showed my covered bit of cloister-  
 wall,  
 The monks closed in a circle and praised  
 loud  
 Till checked, taught what to see and not  
 to see,  
 Being simple bodies, — "That's the very  
 man!  
 Look at the boy who stoops to pat the  
 dog!  
 That woman's like the Prior's niece who  
 comes  
 To care about his asthma: it's the life!"  
 But there my triumph's straw-fire flared  
 and fumed;  
 Their betters took their turn to see and  
 say:  
 The Prior and the learned pulled a face  
 And stopped all that in no time. "How?  
 what's here?  
 Quite from the mark of painting, bless us  
 all!  
 Faces, arms, legs, and bodies like the true  
 As much as pea and pea! it's devil's-  
 game!  
 Your business is not to catch men with  
 show,  
 With homage to the perishable clay,  
 But lift them over it, ignore it all,  
 Make them forget there's such a thing as  
 flesh.  
 Your business is to paint the souls of  
 men —  
 Man's soul, and it's a fire, smoke . . . no,  
 it's not . . .  
 It's vapor done up like a new-born  
 babe —  
 (In that shape when you die it leaves your  
 mouth)  
 It's . . . well, what matters talking,  
 it's the soul!  
 Give us no more of body than shows soul!  
 Here's Giotto, with his Saint a-praising  
 God,  
 That sets us praising, — why not stop  
 with him?  
 Whv put all thoughts of praise out of our  
 head

With wonder at lines, colors, and what  
 not?  
 Paint the soul, never mind the legs and  
 arms!  
 Rub all out, try at it a second time.  
 Oh, that white smallish female with the  
 breasts,  
 She's just my niece . . . Herodias, I  
 would say, —  
 Who went and danced and got men's  
 heads cut off!  
 Have it all out!" Now, is this sense, I  
 ask?  
 A fine way to paint soul, by painting body  
 So ill, the eye can't stop there, must go  
 further  
 And can't fare worse! Thus, yellow  
 does for white  
 When what you put for yellow's simply  
 black,  
 And any sort of meaning looks intense  
 When all beside itself means and looks  
 naught.  
 Why can't a painter lift each foot in turn,  
 Left foot and right foot, go a double step,  
 Make his flesh liker and his soul more like,  
 Both in their order? Take the prettiest  
 face,  
 The Prior's niece . . . patron-saint — is  
 it so pretty  
 You can't discover if it means hope, fear,  
 Sorrow or joy? won't beauty go with  
 these?  
 Suppose I've made her eyes all right and  
 blue,  
 Can't I take breath and try to add life's  
 flash,  
 And then add soul and heighten them  
 three-fold?  
 Or say there's beauty with no soul at all—  
 (I never saw it—put the case the  
 same —)  
 If you get simple beauty and naught else,  
 You get about the best thing God in-  
 vents:  
 That's somewhat: and you'll find the  
 soul you have missed,  
 Within yourself, when you return him  
 thanks.  
 "Rub all out!" Well, well, there's my  
 life, in short,  
 And so the thing has gone on ever since.  
 I'm grown a man no doubt, I've broken  
 bounds:  
 You should not take a fellow eight years  
 old

And make him swear to never kiss the girls.

I'm my own master, paint now as I please —

Having a friend, you see, in the Corner-house!

Lord, it's fast holding by the rings in front —

Those great rings serve more purposes than just

To plant a flag in, or tie up a horse!

And yet the old schooling sticks, the old grave eyes

Are peeping o'er my shoulder as I work,  
The heads shake still — "It's, art's decline, my son!

You're not of the true painters, great and old;

Brother Angelico's the man, you'll find;  
Brother Lorenzo stands his single peer:  
Fag on at flesh, you'll never make the third!"

*Flower o' the pine,*

*You keep your mistr . . . manners, and  
I'll stick to mine!*

I'm not the third, then: bless us, they must know!

Don't you think they're the likeliest to know,

They with their Latin? So, I swallow my rage.

Clench my teeth, suck my lips in tight, and paint

To please them — sometimes do and sometimes don't;

For, doing most, there's pretty sure to come

A turn, some warm eve finds me at my saints —

A laugh, a cry, the business of the world —

*(Flower o' the Peach,*

*Death for us all, and his own life for each!)*

And my whole soul revolves, the cup runs over,

The world and life's too big to pass for a dream,

And I do these wild things in sheer despite,

And play the fooleries you catch me at,  
In pure rage! The old mill-horse, out at grass

After hard years, throws up his stiff heels so,

Although the miller does not preach to him

The only good of grass is to make chaff.  
What would men have? Do they like grass or no —

May they or mayn't they? all I want's the thing

Settled forever one way. As it is,  
You tell too many lies and hurt yourself:

You don't like what you only like too much,

You do like what, if given you at your word,

You find abundantly detestable.

For me, I think I speak as I was taught;  
I always see the garden and God there  
A-making man's wife: and, my lesson learned,

The value and significance of flesh,  
I can't unlearn ten minutes afterwards.

You understand me: I'm a beast, I know.

But see, now — why, I see as certainly  
As that the morning-star's about to shine,  
What will hap some day. We've a youngster here

Comes to our convent, studies what I do,  
Slouches and stares and lets no atom drop:  
His name is Guidi — he'll not mind the monks —

They call him Hulking Tom, he lets them talk —

He picks my practice up — he'll paint apace.

I hope so — though I never live so long,  
I know what's sure to follow. You be judge!

You speak no Latin more than I, belike;  
However, you're my man, you've seen the world

— The beauty and the wonder and the power,

The shapes of things, their colors, lights and shades.

Changes, surprises, — and God made it all!

— For what? Do you feel thankful, ay or no,

For this fair town's face, yonder river's line,

The mountain round it and the sky above,  
Much more the figures of man, woman, child,

These are the frame to? What's it all about?

To be passed over, despised? or dwelt upon,

Wondered at? oh, this last of course! —  
 you say.  
 But why not do as well as say, — paint  
 these  
 Just as they are, careless what comes of  
 it?  
 God's works — paint any one, and count  
 it crime  
 To let a truth slip. Don't object, "His  
 works  
 Are here already; nature is complete:  
 Suppose you reproduce her — (which you  
 can't)  
 There's no advantage! you must beat  
 her, then."  
 For, don't you mark? we're made so  
 that we love  
 First when we see them painted, things  
 we have passed  
 Perhaps a hundred times nor cared to  
 see;  
 And so they are better, painted — better  
 to us,  
 Which is the same thing. Art was given  
 for that;  
 God uses us to help each other so,  
 Lending our minds out. Have you no-  
 ticed, now,  
 Your cullion's hanging face? A bit of  
 chalk,  
 And trust me but you should, though!  
 How much more.  
 If I drew higher things with the same  
 truth!  
 That were to take the Prior's pulpit-place,  
 Interpret God to all of you! Oh, oh,  
 It makes me mad to see what men shall  
 do  
 And we in our graves! This world's  
 no blot for us,  
 Nor blank; it means intensely, and  
 means good:  
 To find its meaning is my meat and  
 drink.  
 "Ay, but you don't so instigate to  
 prayer!"  
 Strikes in the Prior: "when your mean-  
 ing's plain  
 It does not say to folk — remember  
 matins,  
 Or, mind you fast next Friday!" Why,  
 for this  
 What need of art at all? A skull and  
 bones.  
 Two bits of stick nailed crosswise, or,  
 what's best,

A bell to chime the hour with, does as  
 well.  
 I painted a Saint Laurence six months  
 since  
 At Prato, splashed the fresco in fine  
 style:  
 "How looks my painting, now the scaf-  
 fold's down?"  
 I ask a brother: "Hugely," he returns —  
 "Already not one phiz of your three  
 slaves  
 Who turn the Deacon off his toasted side,  
 But's scratched and prodded to our  
 heart's content,  
 The pious people have so eased their own  
 With coming to say prayers there in a  
 rage:  
 We get on fast to see the bricks beneath.  
 Expect another job this time next year,  
 For pity and religion grow i' the crowd —  
 Your painting serves its purpose!"  
 Hang the fools!

— That is — you'll not mistake an idle  
 word  
 Spoke in a huff by a poor monk, God wot,  
 Tasting the air this spicy night which  
 turns  
 The unaccustomed head like Chianti  
 wine!  
 Oh, the church knows! don't misreport  
 me, now!  
 It's natural a poor monk out of bounds  
 Should have his apt word to excuse  
 himself:  
 And harken how I plot to make amends.  
 I have bethought me: I shall paint a  
 piece  
 . . . There's for you! Give me six  
 months, then go, see  
 Something in Sant' Ambrogio's! Bless  
 the nuns!  
 They want a cast o' my office. I shall  
 paint  
 God in the midst, Madonna and her babe,  
 Ringed by a bowery, flowery angel  
 brood,  
 Lilies and vestments and white faces,  
 sweet  
 As puff on puff of grated orris-root  
 When ladies crowd to Church at mid-  
 summer.  
 And then i' the front, of course a saint  
 or two —  
 Saint John, because he saves the Flo-  
 rentines,



Saint Ambrose, who puts down in black  
and white  
The convent's friends and gives them a  
long day,  
And Job, I must have him there past  
mistake,  
The man of Uz (and Us without the z,  
Painters who need his patience). Well,  
all these

Secured at their devotion, up shall come  
Out of a corner when you least expect,  
As one by a dark stair into a great light,  
Music and talking, who but Lippo!  
I! —

Mazed, motionless, and moonstruck —  
I'm the man!

Back I shrink — what is this I see and  
hear?

I, caught up with my monk's-things by  
mistake,

My old serge gown and rope that goes  
all-round,

I, in this presence, this pure company!  
Where's a hole, where's a corner for  
escape?

Then steps a sweet angelic slip of a thing  
Forward, puts out a soft palm — "Not  
so fast!"

— Addresses the celestial presence,  
"nay —

He made you and devised you, after all,  
Though he's none of you! Could Saint  
John there draw —

His camel-hair make up a painting-  
brush?

We come to brother Lippo for all that,  
*Iste perfecit opus!*" So, all smile —

I shuffle sideways with my blushing face  
Under the cover of a hundred wings

Thrown like a spread of kirtles when  
you're gay

And play hot cockles, all the doors being  
shut,

Till, wholly unexpected, in there pops  
The hothead husband! Thus I scuttle  
off

To some safe bench behind, not letting go  
The palm of her, the little lily thing

That spoke the good word for me in the  
nick,

Like the Prior's niece . . . Saint Lucy,  
I would say,

And so all's saved for me, and for the  
church

A pretty picture gained. Go, six months  
hence!

Your hand, sir, and good-by: no lights,  
no lights!

The street's hushed, and I know my own  
way back,

Don't fear me! There's the gray begin-  
ning. Zooks! 1855.

## ANDREA DEL SARTO

### CALLED "THE FAULTLESS PAINTER"

BUT do not let us quarrel any more,  
No, my Lucrezia; bear with me for  
once:

Sit down and all shall happen as you  
wish.

You turn your face, but does it bring your  
heart?

I'll work then for your friend's friend,  
never fear,

Treat his own subject after his own way,  
Fix his own time, accept too his own  
price,

And shut the money into this small hand  
When next it takes mine. Will it?  
tenderly?

Oh, I'll content him, — but to-morrow,  
Love!

I often am much wearier than you think,  
This evening more than usual, and it  
seems

As if — forgive now — should you let me  
sit

Here by the window with your hand in  
mine

And look a half-hour forth on Fiesole,  
Both of one mind, as married people use,

Quietly, quietly the evening through,  
I might get up to-morrow to my work

Cheerful and fresh as ever. Let us try.  
To-morrow, how you shall be glad for  
this!

Your soft hand is a woman of itself,  
And mine the man's bared breast she  
curls inside.

Don't count the time lost, neither; you  
must serve

For each of the five pictures we require:  
It saves a model. So! keep looking so —

My serpentine beauty, rounds on  
rounds!

— How could you ever prick those perfect  
ears,

Even to put the pearl there! oh, so  
sweet —

My face, my moon, my everybody's  
 moon,  
 Which everybody looks on and calls his,  
 And, I suppose, is looked on by in turn,  
 While she looks — no one's: very dear,  
 no less.  
 You smile? why, there's my picture  
 ready made,  
 There's what we painters call our har-  
 mony!  
 A common grayness silvers everything, —  
 All in a twilight, you and I alike  
 — You, at the point of your first pride in  
 me  
 (That's gone you know), — but I, at  
 every point;  
 My youth, my hope, my art, being all  
 toned down  
 To yonder sober pleasant Fiesole.  
 There's the bell clinking from the chapel-  
 top;  
 That length of convent-wall across the  
 way  
 Holds the trees safer, huddled more in-  
 side;  
 The last monk leaves the garden; days  
 decrease,  
 And autumn grows, autumn in every-  
 thing,  
 Eh? the whole seems to fall into a shape  
 As if I saw alike my work and self  
 And all that I was born to be and do,  
 A twilight-piece. Love, we are in God's  
 hand.  
 How strange now looks the life he makes  
 us lead;  
 So free we seem, so fettered fast we are!  
 I feel he laid the fetter: let it lie!  
 This chamber for example — turn your  
 head —  
 All that's behind us! You don't under-  
 stand  
 Nor care to understand about my art,  
 But you can hear at least when people  
 speak:  
 And that cartoon, the second from the  
 door  
 — It is the thing, Love! so such things  
 should be —  
 Behold Madonna! — I am bold to say.  
 I can do with my pencil what I know,  
 What I see, what at bottom of my heart  
 I wish for, if I ever wish so deep —  
 Do easily, too — when I say, perfectly,  
 I do not boast, perhaps: yourself are  
 judge,

Who listened to the Legate's talk last  
 week,  
 And just as much they used to say in  
 France.  
 At any rate 'tis easy, all of it!  
 No sketches first, no studies, that's long  
 past:  
 I do what many dream of all their lives,  
 — Dream? strive to do, and agonize to  
 do,  
 And fail in doing. I could count twenty  
 such  
 On twice your fingers, and not leave this  
 town,  
 Who strive — you don't know how the  
 others strive  
 To paint a little thing like that you  
 smeared  
 Carelessly passing with your robes  
 afloat, —  
 Yet do much less, so much less, Someone  
 says,  
 (I know his name, no matter) — so much  
 less!  
 Well, less is more, Lucrezia: I am judged.  
 There burns a truer light of God in them.  
 In their vexed beating stuffed and  
 stopped-up brain,  
 Heart, or whate'er else, than goes on to  
 prompt  
 This low-pulsed forthright craftsman's  
 hand of mine.  
 Their works drop groundward, but them-  
 selves, I know,  
 Reach many a time a heaven that's shut  
 to me,  
 Enter and take their place there sure  
 enough,  
 Though they come back and cannot tell  
 the world.  
 My works are nearer heaven, but I sit  
 here.  
 The sudden blood of these men! at a  
 word —  
 Praise them, it boils, or blame them, it  
 boils too.  
 I, painting from myself and to myself,  
 Know what I do, am unmoved by men's  
 blame  
 Or their praise either. Somebody re-  
 marks  
 Morello's outline there is wrongly traced,  
 His hue mistaken; what of that? or  
 else,  
 Rightly traced and well ordered; what  
 of that?

Speak as they please, what does the  
 mountain care?  
 Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his  
 grasp,  
 Or what's a heaven for? All is silver-  
 gray  
 Placid and perfect with my art: the  
 worse!  
 I know both what I want and what might  
 gain,  
 And yet how profitless to know, to sigh  
 "Had I been two, another and myself,  
 Our head would have o'erlooked the  
 world!" No doubt.  
 Yonder's a work now, of that famous  
 youth  
 The Urbinate who died five years ago.  
 ('Tis copied, George Vasari sent it me.)  
 Well, I can fancy how he did it all,  
 Pouring his soul, with kings and popes  
 to see,  
 Reaching, that heaven might so replenish  
 him,  
 Above and through his art — for it gives  
 way;  
 That arm is wrongly put — and there  
 again —  
 A fault to pardon in the drawing's lines,  
 Its body, so to speak: its soul is right,  
 He means right — that, a child may un-  
 derstand.  
 Still, what an arm! and I could alter it:  
 But all the play, the insight and the  
 stretch —  
 Out of me, out of me! And wherefore  
 out?  
 Had you enjoined them on me, given me  
 soul,  
 We might have risen to Rafael, I and  
 you!  
 Nay, Love, you did give all I asked, I  
 think —  
 More than I merit, yes, by many times.  
 But had you — oh, with the same perfect  
 brow,  
 And perfect eyes, and more than perfect  
 mouth,  
 And the low voice my soul hears, as a  
 bird  
 The fowler's pipe, and follows to the  
 snare —  
 Had you, with these the same, but  
 brought a mind!  
 Some women do so. Had the mouth  
 there urged  
 "God and the glory! never care for gain,

The present by the future, what is that?  
 Live for fame, side by side with Agnolo!  
 Rafael is waiting: up to God, all three!"  
 I might have done it for you. So it  
 seems:  
 Perhaps not. All is as God overrules.  
 Beside, incentives come from the soul's  
 self;  
 The rest avail not. Why do I need you?  
 What wife had Rafael, or has Agnolo?  
 In this world, who can do a thing, will  
 not;  
 And who would do it, cannot, I perceive:  
 Yet the will's somewhat — somewhat,  
 too, the power —  
 And thus we half-men struggle. At the  
 end,  
 God, I conclude, compensates, punishes.  
 'Tis safer for me, if the award be strict,  
 That I am something underrated here,  
 Poor this long while, despised, to speak  
 the truth.  
 I dared not, do you know, leave home  
 all day,  
 For fear of chancing on the Paris lords.  
 The best is when they pass and look aside;  
 But they speak sometimes; I must bear  
 it all.  
 Well may they speak! That Francis,  
 that first time,  
 And that long festal year at Fontaine-  
 bleau!  
 I surely then could sometimes leave the  
 ground,  
 Put on the glory, Rafael's daily wear,  
 In that humane great monarch's golden  
 look, —  
 One finger in his beard or twisted curl  
 Over his mouth's good mark that made  
 the smile,  
 One arm about my shoulder, round my  
 neck,  
 The jingle of his gold chain in my ear,  
 I painting proudly with his breath  
 on me,  
 All his court round him, seeing with his  
 eyes,  
 Such frank French eyes, and such a fire  
 of souls  
 Profuse, my hand kept plying by those  
 hearts, —  
 And, best of all, this, this, this face be-  
 yond,  
 This in the background, waiting on my  
 work,  
 To crown the issue with a last reward!

A good time, was it not, my kingly days?  
And had you not grown restless . . . but

I know —

'Tis done and past; 'twas right, my in-  
stinct said;

Too live the life grew, golden and not gray,  
And I'm the weak-eyed bat no sun  
should tempt

Out of the grange whose four walls make  
his world.

How could it end in any other way?

You called me, and I came home to your  
heart.

The triumph was — to reach and stay  
there; since

I reached it ere the triumph, what is lost?  
Let my hands frame your face in your

hair's gold,

You beautiful Lucrezia that are mine!

"Rafael did this, Andrea painted that;

The Roman's is the better when you pray,

But still the other's Virgin was his  
wife" —

Men will excuse me. I am glad to judge

Both pictures in your presence; clearer  
grows

My better fortune, I resolve to think.

For, do you know, Lucrezia, as God lives,

Said one day Agnolo, his very self,

To Rafael . . . I have known it all these  
years . . .

(When the young man was flaming out  
his thoughts

Upon a palace-wall for Rome to see,

Too lifted up in heart because of it)

"Friend, there's a certain sorry little  
scrub

Goes up and down our Florence, none  
cares how,

Who, were he set to plan and execute

As you are, pricked on by your popes  
and kings,

Would bring the sweat into that brow of  
yours!"

To Rafael's! — And indeed the arm is  
wrong.

I hardly dare . . . yet, only you to see,  
Give the chalk here — quick, thus the line

should go!

Ay, but the soul! he's Rafael! rub it  
out!

Still, all I care for, if he spoke the truth,

(What he? why, who but Michel Agnolo?

Do you forget already words like those?)

If really there was such a chance, so  
lost, —

Is, whether you're — not grateful — but  
more pleased.

Well, let me think so. And you smile  
indeed!

This hour has been an hour! Another  
smile?

If you would sit thus by me every night

I should work better, do you comprehend?

I mean that I should earn more, give  
you more.

See, it is settled dusk now; there's a  
star;

Morello's gone, the watch-lights show  
the wall,

The cue-owls speak the name we call  
them by.

Come from the window, love, — come in,  
at last,

Inside the melancholy little house

We built to be so gay with. God is just.

King Francis may forgive me: oft at  
nights

When I look up from painting, eyes tired  
out,

The walls become illumined, brick from  
brick

Distinct, instead of mortar, fierce bright  
gold,

That gold of his I did cement them with!

Let us but love each other. Must you  
go?

That Cousin here again? he waits out-  
side?

Must see you — you, and not with me?  
Those loans?

More gaming debts to pay? you smiled  
for that?

Well, let smiles buy me! have you more  
to spend?

While hand and eye and something of a  
heart

Are left me, work's my ware, and what's  
it worth?

I'll pay my fancy. Only let me sit

The gray remainder of the evening out,

Idle, you call it, and muse perfectly

How I could paint, were I but back in  
France,

One picture, just one more — the Virgin's  
face.

Not yours this time! I want you at my  
side

To hear them — that is, Michel Agnolo —

Judge all I do and tell you of its worth.

Will you? To-morrow, satisfy your  
friend.

I take the subjects for his corridor,  
 Finish the portrait out of hand — there,  
     there,  
 And throw him in another thing or two  
 If he demurs; the whole should prove  
     enough  
 To pay for this same Cousin's freak.  
     Beside,  
 What's better and what's all I care  
     about,  
 Get you the thirteen scudi for the ruff!  
 Love, does that please you? Ah, but  
     what does he,  
 The Cousin! what does he to please you  
     more?

I am grown peaceful as old age to-  
     night.  
 I regret little, I would change still less.  
 Since there my past life lies, why alter it?  
 The very wrong to Francis! — it is true  
 I took his coin, was tempted and com-  
     plied,  
 And built this house and sinned, and all  
     is said.  
 My father and my mother died of want.  
 Well, had I riches of my own? you see  
 How one gets rich! Let each one bear  
     his lot.  
 They were born poor, lived poor, and  
     poor they died;  
 And I have labored somewhat in my  
     time  
 And not been paid profusely. Some  
     good son  
 Paint my two hundred pictures — let him  
     try!  
 No doubt, there's something strikes a  
     balance. Yes.  
 You loved me quite enough, it seems  
     to-night.  
 'This must suffice me here. What would  
     one have?  
 In heaven, perhaps, new chances, one  
     more chance —  
 Four great walls in the New Jerusalem,  
 Meted on each side by the angel's reed,  
 For Leonard, Rafael, Agnolo and me  
 To cover — the three first without a wife,  
 While I have mine! So — still they  
     overcome  
 Because there's still Lucrezia, — as I  
     choose.

Again the Cousin's whistle! Go, my  
     Love. 1855.

ONE WORD MORE.<sup>1</sup>

TO E. B. B.

*London, September, 1855.*

## I

THERE they are, my fifty men and women  
 Naming me the fifty poems finished!  
 Take them, Love, the book and me to-  
     gether:  
 Where the heart lies, let the brain lie also.

## II

Rafael made a century of sonnets,  
 Made and wrote them in a certain volume  
 Dinted with the silver-pointed pencil  
 Else he only used to draw Madonnas:  
 These, the world might view — but one,  
     the volume.  
 Who that one, you ask? — Your heart  
     instructs you.  
 Did she live and love it all her lifetime?  
 Did she drop, his lady of the sonnets,  
 Die, and let it drop beside her pillow  
 Where it lay in place of Rafael's glory,  
 Rafael's cheek so duteous and so loving,  
 Check, the world was wont to hail a  
     painter's,  
 Rafael's cheek, her love had turned a  
     poet's?

## III

You and I would rather read that volume,  
 (Taken to his beating bosom by it)  
 Lean and list the bosom-beats of Rafael,  
 Would we not? than wonder at Madon-  
     nas —  
 Her, San Sisto names, and Her, Foligno,  
 Her, that visits Florence in a vision,  
 Her, that's left with lilies in the Louvre —  
 Seen by us and all the world in circle.

## IV

You and I will never read that volume.  
 Guido Reni, like his own eye's apple  
 Guarded long the treasure-book and  
     loved it.  
 Guido Reni dying, all Bologna  
 Cried, and the world cried too, "Ours,  
     the treasure!"  
 Suddenly, as rare things will, it vanished.

<sup>1</sup> The last poem of the collection *Men and Women*, two volumes, published in 1855, and containing a large part of Browning's greatest work. Here, for once, Browning speaks in his own person.



## V

Dante once prepared to paint an angel:  
Whom to please? You whisper "Beatrice."

While he mused and traced it and retraced it,

(Peradventure with a pen corroded  
Still by drops of that hot ink he dipped  
for,

When, his left-hand i' the hair o' the  
wicked,

Back he held the brow and pricked its  
stigma,

Bit into the live man's flesh for parch-  
ment,

Loosed him, laughed to see the writing  
rankle,

Let the wretch go festering through  
Florence) —

Dante, who loved well because he hated,  
Hated wickedness that hinders loving,

Dante standing, studying his angel, —  
In there broke the folk of his Inferno.

Says he — "Certain people of impor-  
tance"

(Such he gave his daily dreadful line to)  
"Entered and would seize, forsooth, the  
poet."

Says the poet — "Then I stopped my  
painting."

## VI

You and I would rather see that angel,  
Painted by the tenderness of Dante,

Would we not? — than read a fresh  
Inferno.

## VII

You and I will never see that picture.  
While he mused on love and Beatrice,

While he softened o'er his outlined angel,  
In they broke, those "People of impor-  
tance:"

We and Bice bear the loss forever.

## VIII

What of Rafael's sonnets, Dante's pic-  
ture?

This: no artist lives and loves, that longs  
not

Once, and only once, and for one only,  
(Ah, the prize!) to find his love a lan-  
guage

It and fair and simple and sufficient —

Using nature that's an art to others,  
Not, this one time, art that's turned his  
nature,

Ay, of all the artists living, loving,  
None but would forego his proper  
dowry, —

Does he paint? he fain would write a  
poem, —

Does he write? he fain would paint a  
picture,

Put to proof art alien to the artist's,  
Once, and only once, and for one only,

So to be the man and leave the artist,  
Gain the man's joy, miss the artist's  
sorrow.

## IX

Wherefore? Heaven's gift takes earth's  
abatement!

He who smites the rock and spreads the  
water,

Bidding drink and live a crowd beneath  
him,

Even he, the minute makes immortal,  
Proves, perchance, but mortal in the  
minute.

Desecrates, belike, the deed in doing.  
While he smites, how can he but remember,

So he smote before, in such a peril,  
When they stood and mocked — "Shall  
smiting help us?"

When they drank and sneered — "A  
stroke is easy!"

When they wiped their mouths and went  
their journey,

Throwing him for thanks — "But  
drought was pleasant."

Thus old memories mar the actual tri-  
umph;

Thus the doing savors of disrelish;  
Thus achievement lacks a gracious some-  
what;

O'er-importuned brows becloud the man-  
date,

Carelessness or consciousness — the ges-  
ture.

For he bears an ancient wrong about him,  
Sees and knows again those phalanx'd  
faces,

Hears, yet one time more, the 'customed  
prelude —

"How shouldst thou, of all men, smite,  
and save us?"

Guesses what is like to prove the sequel —  
"Egypt's flesh-pots — nay, the drought  
was better."

## X

Oh, the crowd must have emphatic  
warrant!  
Theirs, the Sinai-forehead's cloven bril-  
liance,  
Right-arm's rod-sweep, tongue's imperial  
fiat.  
Never dares the man put off the prophet.

## XI

Did he love one face from out the thou-  
sands,  
(Were she Jethro's daughter, white and  
wifely,  
Were she but the Æthiopian bondslave.)  
He would envy yon dumb patient camel,  
Keeping a reserve of scanty water  
Meant to save his own life in the desert;  
Ready in the desert to deliver  
(Kneeling down to let his breast be  
opened)  
Hoard and life together for his mistress.

## XII

I shall never, in the years remaining,  
Paint you pictures, no, nor carve you  
statues,  
Make you music that should all-express  
me;  
So it seems: I stand on my attainment.  
This of verse alone, one life allows me;  
Verse and nothing else have I to give you.  
Other heights in other lives, God willing:  
All the gifts from all the heights, you own,  
Love!

## XIII

Yet a semblance of resource avails us —  
Shade so finely touched, love's sense must  
seize it,  
Take these lines, look lovingly and nearly,  
Lines I write the first time and the last  
time.  
He who works in fresco, steals a hair-  
brush,  
Curbs the liberal hand, subservient  
proudly,  
Cramps his spirit, crowds its all in little,  
Makes a strange art of an art familiar,  
Fills his lady's missal-marge with flower-  
ets.  
He who blows through bronze, may  
breathe through silver,  
Fiftly serenade a slumbrous princess.  
He who writes, may write for once as I do.

## XIV

Love, you saw me gather men and women,  
Live or dead or fashioned by my fancy,  
Enter each and all, and use their service,  
Speak from every mouth, — the speech,  
a poem.  
Hardly shall I tell my joys and sorrows,  
Hope and fears, belief and disbelieving:  
I am mine and yours — the rest be all  
men's,  
Karshish, Cleon, Norbert, and the fifty.  
Let me speak this once in my true per-  
son,  
Not as Lippo, Roland, or Andrea,  
Though the fruit of speech be just this  
sentence:  
Pray you, look on these my men and  
women,  
Take and keep my fifty poems finished;  
Where my heart lies, let my brain lie  
also!  
Poor the speech; be how I speak, for all  
things.

## XV

Not but that you know me! Lo, the  
moon's self!  
Here in London, yonder late in Florence,  
Still we find her face, the thrice-trans-  
figured,  
Curving on a sky imbrued with color,  
Drifted over Fiesole by twilight,  
Came she, our new crescent of a hair's-  
breadth.  
Full she flared it, lamping Samminiato,  
Rounder 'twixt the cypresses and rounder,  
Perfect till the nightingales applauded.  
Now, a piece of her old self, impoverished,  
Hard to greet, she traverses the house-  
roofs,  
Hurries with unhandsome thrift of silver,  
Goes dispiritedly, glad to finish.

## XVI

What, there's nothing in the moon note-  
worthy?  
Nay: for if that moon could love a  
mortal,  
Use, to charm him (so to fit a fancy),  
All her magic ('tis the old sweet myths),  
She would turn a new side to her mortal,  
Side unseen of herdsman, huntsman,  
steersman —  
Blank to Zoroaster on his terrace,  
Blind to Galileo on his turret,

Dumb to Homer, dumb to Keats — him,  
 even!  
 Think, the wonder of the moonstruck  
 mortal —  
 When she turns round, comes again in  
 heaven,  
 Opens out anew for worse or better!  
 Proves she like some portent of an iceberg  
 Swimming full upon the ship it founders,  
 Hungry with huge teeth of splintered  
 crystals?  
 Proves she as the paved work of a  
 sapphire  
 Seen by Moses when he climbed the  
 mountain?  
 Moses, Aaron, Nadab and Abihu  
 Climbed and saw the very God, the  
 Highest,  
 Stand upon the paved work of a sapphire.  
 Like the bodied heaven in his clearness  
 Shone the stone, the sapphire of that  
 paved work,  
 When they ate and drank and saw God  
 also!

## XVII

What were seen? None knows, none  
 ever shall know.  
 Only this is sure — the sight were other,  
 Not the moon's same side, born late in  
 Florence,  
 Dying now impoverished here in London.  
 God be thanked, the meanest of his  
 creatures  
 Boasts two soul-sides, one to face the  
 world with,  
 One to show a woman when he loves her!

## XVIII

This I say of me, but think of you, Love!  
 This to you — yourself my moon of poets!  
 Ah, but that's the world's side, there's  
 the wonder,  
 Thus they see you, praise you, think they  
 know you!  
 There, in turn I stand with them and  
 praise you —  
 Out of my own self, I dare to phrase it.  
 But the best is when I glide from out  
 them,  
 Cross a step or two of dubious twilight,  
 Come out on the other side, the novel  
 Silent silver lights and darks undreamed  
 of,  
 Where I hush and bless myself with  
 silence.

## XIX

Oh, their Rafael of the dear Madonnas,  
 Oh, their Dante of the dread Inferno,  
 Wrote one song — and in my brain I sing  
 it,  
 Drew one angel — borne, see, on my  
 bosom!

R. B. 1855.

## BEN KARSHOOK'S WISDOM

## I

"WOULD a man 'scape the rod?"  
 Rabbi Ben Karshook saith,  
 "See that he turn to God  
 The day before his death."

"Ay, could a man inquire  
 When it shall come!" I say.  
 The Rabbi's eye shoots fire —  
 "Then let him turn to-day!"

## II

Quoth a young Sadducee:  
 "Reader of many rolls,  
 Is it so certain we  
 Have, as they tell us, souls?"

"Son, there is no reply!"  
 The Rabbi bit his beard:  
 "Certain, a soul have I —  
 We may have none," he sneered.

Thus Karshook, the Hiram's-Hammer,  
 The Right-hand Temple-column,  
 Taught babes in grace their grammar,  
 And struck the simple, solemn.

1856.

## AMONG THE ROCKS

OH, good gigantic smile o' the brown old  
 earth,  
 This autumn morning! How he sets  
 his bones  
 To bask i' the sun, and thrusts out knees  
 and feet  
 For the ripple to run over in its mirth;  
 Listening the while, where on the heap  
 of stones  
 The white breast of the sea-lark twitters  
 sweet.

That is the doctrine, simple, ancient, true ;  
 Such is life's trial, as old earth smiles  
 and knows.  
 If you loved only what were worth your  
 love,  
 Love were clear gain, and wholly well  
 for you :  
 Make the low nature better by your  
 throes !  
 Give earth yourself, go up for gain above !  
 1864.

## ABT VOGLER

(AFTER HE HAS BEEN EXTEMPORIZING  
 UPON THE MUSICAL INSTRUMENT OF HIS  
 INVENTION)

Would that the structure brave, the  
 manifold music I build,  
 Bidding my organ obey, calling its  
 keys to their work,  
 Claiming each slave of the sound, at a  
 touch, as when Solomon willed  
 Armies of angels that soar, legions of  
 demons that lurk,  
 Man, brute, reptile, fly, — alien of end  
 and of aim,  
 Adverse, each from the other heaven-  
 high, hell-deep removed, —  
 Should rush into sight at once as he  
 named the ineffable Name,  
 And pile him a palace straight, to pleas-  
 ure the princess he loved !  
 Would it might tarry like his, the beauti-  
 ful building of mine,  
 This which my keys in a crowd pressed  
 and importuned to raise !  
 Ah, one and all, how they helped, would  
 dispart now and now combine,  
 Zealous to hasten the work, heighten  
 their master his praise !  
 And one would bury his brow with a  
 blind plunge down to hell,  
 Burrow awhile and build, broad on the  
 roots of things,  
 Then up again swim into sight, having  
 based me my palace well,  
 Founded it, fearless of flame, flat on  
 the nether springs.  
 And another would mount and march,  
 like the excellent minion he was,  
 Ay, another and yet another, one  
 crowd but with many a crest,

Raising my rampired walls of gold as  
 transparent as glass,  
 Eager to do and die, yield each his  
 place to the rest :  
 For higher still and higher (as a runner  
 tips with fire,  
 When a great illumination surprises a  
 festal night —  
 Outlined round and round Rome's dome  
 from space to spire)  
 Up, the pinnacled glory reached, and  
 the pride of my soul was in sight.

In sight? Not half! for it seemed, it  
 was certain, to match man's birth,  
 Nature in turn conceived, obeying an  
 impulse as I ;  
 And the emulous heaven yearned down,  
 made effort to reach the earth,  
 As the earth had done her best, in my  
 passion, to scale the sky :  
 Novel splendors burst forth, grew familiar  
 and dwelt with mine,  
 Not a point nor peak but found and  
 fixed its wandering star ;  
 Meteor-moons, balls of blaze : and they  
 did not pale nor pine,  
 For earth had attained to heaven,  
 there was no more near nor far.

Nay more; for there wanted not who  
 walked in the glare and glow,  
 Presences plain in the place; or, fresh  
 from the Protoplast,  
 Furnished for ages to come, when a kind-  
 lier wind should blow,  
 Lured now to begin and live, in a house  
 to their liking at last ;  
 Or else the wonderful Dead who have  
 passed through the body and gone,  
 But were back once more to breathe  
 in an old world worth their new :  
 What never had been, was now; what  
 was, as it shall be anon ;  
 And what is, — shall I say, matched  
 both? for I was made perfect too.

All through my keys that gave their  
 sounds to a wish of my soul,  
 All through my soul that praised as its  
 wish flowed visibly forth,  
 All through music and me! For think,  
 had I painted the whole,  
 Why, there it had stood, to see, nor the  
 process so wonder-worth :

Had I written the same, made verse —  
 still, effect proceeds from cause,  
 Ye know why the forms are fair, ye  
 hear how the tale is told;  
 It is all triumphant art, but art in obe-  
 dience to laws,  
 Painter and poet are proud in the  
 artist-list enrolled: —

But here is the finger of God, a flash of  
 the will that can,  
 Existent behind all laws, that made  
 them and, lo, they are!  
 And I know not if, save in this, such gift  
 be allowed to man,  
 That out of three sounds he frame, not  
 a fourth sound, but a star.  
 Consider it well: each tone of our scale  
 in itself is naught:  
 It is everywhere in the world — loud,  
 soft, and all is said:  
 Give it to me to use! I mix it with two in  
 my thought:  
 And there! Ye have heard and seen:  
 consider and bow the head!

Well, it is gone at last, the palace of  
 music I reared;  
 Gone! and the good tears start, the  
 praises that come too slow;  
 For one is assured at first, one scarce can  
 say that he feared,  
 That he even gave it a thought, the  
 gone thing was to go.  
 Never to be again! But many more of  
 the kind  
 As good, nay, better, perchance: is  
 this your comfort to me?  
 To me, who must be saved because I  
 cling with my mind  
 To the same, same self, same love, same  
 God: ay, what was, shall be.

Therefore to whom turn I but to thee,  
 the ineffable Name?  
 Builder and maker, thou, of houses not  
 made with hands!  
 What, have fear of change from thee who  
 art ever the same?  
 Doubt that thy power can fill the  
 heart that thy power expands?  
 There shall never be one lost good!  
 What was, shall live as before;  
 The evil is null, is naught, is silence  
 implying sound;

What was good shall be good, with, for  
 evil, so much good more;  
 On the earth the broken arcs; in the  
 heaven a perfect round.

All we have willed or hoped or dreamed  
 of good shall exist;  
 Not its semblance, but itself; no  
 beauty, nor good, nor power  
 Whose voice has gone forth, but each  
 survives for the melodist  
 When eternity affirms the conception of  
 an hour,  
 The high that proved too high, the heroic  
 for earth too hard,  
 The passion that left the ground to  
 lose itself in the sky,  
 Are music sent up to God by the lover and  
 the bard;  
 Enough that he heard it once: we  
 shall hear it by-and-by.

And what is our failure here but a tri-  
 umph's evidence  
 For the fulness of the days? Have  
 we withered or agonized?  
 Why else was the pause prolonged but  
 that singing might issue thence?  
 Why rushed the discords in, but that  
 harmony should be prized?  
 Sorrow is hard to bear, and doubt is  
 slow to clear,  
 Each sufferer says his say, his scheme  
 of the weal and woe:  
 But God has a few of us whom he whispers  
 in the ear;  
 The rest may reason and welcome; 'tis  
 we musicians know.

Well, it is earth with me; silence resumes  
 her reign:  
 I will be patient and proud, and soberly  
 acquiesce.  
 Give me the keys. I feel for the common  
 chord again,  
 Sliding by semitones till I sink to the  
 minor, — yes,  
 And I blunt it into a ninth, and I stand  
 on alien ground,  
 Surveying awhile the heights I rolled  
 from into the deep;  
 Which, hark, I have dared and done, for  
 my resting-place is found,  
 The C Major of this life: so, now I  
 will try to sleep. 1864.



## RABBI BEN EZRA

GROW old along with me !  
The best is yet to be,  
The last of life, for which the first was  
made :

Our times are in his hand  
Who saith, "A whole I planned,  
Youth shows but half; trust God: see  
all, nor be afraid!"

Not that, amassing flowers,  
Youth sighed, "Which rose make ours,  
Which lily leave and then as best re-  
call?"

Not that, admiring stars,  
It yearned, "Nor Jove, nor Mars;  
Mine be some figured flame which blends,  
transcends them all!"

Not for such hopes and fears  
Annulling youth's brief years,  
Do I remonstrate: folly wide the mark!  
Rather I prize the doubt  
Low kinds exist without,  
Finished and finite clods, untroubled by  
a spark.

Poor vaunt of life indeed,  
Were man but formed to feed  
On joy, to solely seek and find a feast:  
Such feasting ended, then  
As sure an end to men;  
Irks care the crop-full bird? Frets  
doubt the maw-crammed beast?

Rejoice we are allied  
To that which doth provide  
And not partake, effect and not receive!  
A spark disturbs our clod;  
Nearer we hold of God  
Who gives, than of his tribes that take, I  
must believe.

Then, welcome each rebuff  
That turns earth's smoothness rough,  
Each sting that bids nor sit nor stand  
but go!

Be our joys three-parts pain!  
Strive, and hold cheap the strain;  
Learn, nor account the pang; dare,  
never grudge the throe!

For thence, — a paradox  
Which comforts while it mocks, —  
Shall life succeed in that it seems to fail:

What I aspired to be,  
And was not, comforts me:  
A brute I might have been, but would  
not sink i' the scale.

What is he but a brute  
Whose flesh has soul to suit,  
Whose spirit works lest arms and legs  
want play?

To man, propose this test —  
Thy body at its best,  
How far can that project thy soul on its  
lone way?

Yet gifts should prove their use:  
I own the Past profuse  
Of power each side, perfection every turn:  
Eyes, ears took in their dole,  
Brain treasured up the whole;  
Should not the heart beat once "How  
good to live and learn"?

Not once beat "Praise be thine!  
I see the whole design,  
I, who saw power, see now Love perfect  
too:  
Perfect I call thy plan:  
Thanks that I was a man!  
Maker, remake, complete, — I trust  
what thou shalt do!"

For pleasant is this flesh;  
Our soul, in its rose-mesh  
Pulled ever to the earth, still yearns for  
rest:

Would we some prize might hold  
To match those manifold  
Possessions of the brute, — gain most, as  
we did best!

Let us not always say,  
"Spite of this flesh to-day  
I strove, made head, gained ground upon  
the whole!"  
As the bird wings and sings,  
Let us cry, "All good things  
Are ours, nor soul helps flesh more, now,  
than flesh helps soul!"

Therefore I summon age  
To grant youth's heritage,  
Life's struggle having so far reached its  
term:

Thence shall I pass, approved  
A man, for aye removed  
From the developed brute; a God though  
in the germ.

And I shall thereupon  
Take rest, ere I be gone  
Once more on my adventure brave and  
new :

Fearless and unperplexed,  
When I wage battle next,  
What weapons to select, what armor to  
indue.

Youth ended, I shall try  
My gain or loss thereby ;  
Leave the fire ashes, what survives is  
gold :

And I shall weigh the same,  
Give life its praise or blame :  
Young, all lay in dispute ; I shall know,  
being old.

For note, when evening shuts,  
A certain moment cuts  
The deed off, calls the glory from the gray :  
A whisper from the west  
Shoots — "Add this to the rest,  
Take it and try its worth : here dies  
another day."

So, still within this life,  
Though lifted o'er its strife,  
Let me discern, compare, pronounce at  
last,

"This rage was right i' the main,  
That acquiescence vain :  
The Future I may face now I have proved  
the Past."

For more is not reserved  
To man, with soul just nerved  
To act to-morrow what he learns to-day :  
Here, work enough to watch  
The Master work, and catch  
Hints of the proper craft, tricks of the  
tool's true play.

As it was better, youth  
Should strive, through acts uncouth,  
Toward making, than repose on aught  
found made :

So, better, age, exempt  
From strife, should know, than tempt  
Further. Thou waitedst age : wait death  
nor be afraid !

Enough now, if the Right  
And Good and Infinite  
Be named here, as thou callest thy hand  
thine own,

With knowledge absolute,  
Subject to no dispute  
From fools that crowded youth, nor let  
thee feel alone.

Be there, for once and all,  
Severed great minds from small,  
Announced to each his station in the  
Past !

Was I, the world arraigned,  
Were they, my soul disdained,  
Right? Let age speak the truth and  
give us peace at last !

Now, who shall arbitrate?  
Ten men love what I hate,  
Shun what I follow, slight what I receive ;  
Ten, who in ears and eyes  
Match me ; we all surmise,  
They this thing, and I that : whom shall  
my soul believe?

Not on the vulgar mass  
Called "work," must sentence pass,  
Things done, that took the eye and had  
the price ;  
O'er which, from level stand,  
The low world laid its hand,  
Found straightway to its mind, could  
value in a trice :

But all, the world's coarse thumb  
And finger failed to plumb,  
So passed in making up the main account ;  
All instincts immature,  
All purposes unsure,  
That weighed not as his work, yet swelled  
the man's amount :

Thoughts hardly to be packed  
Into a narrow act,  
Fancies that broke through language and  
escaped ;

All I could never be,  
All, men ignored in me,  
This, I was worth to God, whose wheel the  
pitcher shaped.

Ay, note that Potter's wheel,  
That metaphor ! and feel  
Why time spins fast, why passive lies  
our clay, —

Thou, to whom fools propound,  
When the wine makes its round,  
"Since life fleets, all is change ; the  
Past gone, seize to-day !"

Fool! All that is, at all,  
 Lasts ever, past recall;  
 Earth changes, but thy soul and God  
     stand sure:  
 What entered into thee,  
*That* was, is, and shall be:  
 Time's wheel runs back or stops: Potter  
     and clay endure.

He fixed thee 'mid this dance  
 Of plastic circumstance,  
 This Present, thou, forsooth, would fain  
     arrest:  
 Machinery just meant  
 To give thy soul its bent,  
 Try thee and turn thee forth, sufficiently  
     impressed.

What though the earlier grooves,  
 Which ran the laughing loves  
 Around thy base, no longer pause and  
     press?  
 What though, about thy rim,  
 Skull-things in order grim  
 Grow out, in graver mood, obey the  
     sterner stress?

Look not thou down but up!  
 To uses of a cup,  
 The festal board, lamp's flash and trum-  
     pet's peal,  
 The new wine's foaming flow,  
 The master's lips aglow!  
 Thou, heaven's consummate cup, what  
     needst thou with earth's wheel?

But I need, now as then,  
 Thee, God, who moulded men;  
 And since, not even while the whirl was  
     worst,  
 Did I — to the wheel of life  
 With shapes and colors rife,  
 Bound dizzily — mistake my end, to slake  
     thy thirst:

So, take and use thy work:  
 Amend what flaws may lurk,  
 What strain o' the stuff, what warpings  
     past the aim!  
 My times be in thy hand!  
 Perfect the cup as planned!  
 Let age approve of youth, and death  
     complete the same!

# CALIBAN UPON SETEBOS; OR, NATURAL THEOLOGY IN THE ISLAND

"Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such a  
     one as thyself."

[*'WILL* sprawl, now that the heat of day  
     is best,  
 Flat on his belly in the pit's much mire,  
 With elbows wide, fists clenched to prop  
     his chin.  
 And, while he kicks both feet in the cool  
     slush,  
 And feels about his spine small eft-things  
     course,  
 Run in and out each arm, and make  
     him laugh:  
 And while above his head a pompion-  
     plant,  
 Coating the cave-top as a brow its eye,  
 Creeps down to touch and tickle hair and  
     beard,  
 And now a flower drops with a bee inside,  
 And now a fruit to snap at, catch and  
     crunch, —  
 He looks out o'er yon sea which sunbeams  
     cross  
 And recross till they weave a spider-web,  
 (Meshes of fire, some great fish breaks  
     at time,)  
 And talks to his own self, howe'er he please,  
 Touching that other, whom his dam called  
     God.  
 Because to talk about Him, vexes — ha,  
 Could He but know! and time to vex is  
     now,  
 When talk is safer than in winter-time.  
 Moreover Prosper and Miranda sleep  
 In confidence he drudges at their task,  
 And it is good to cheat the pair, and gibe,  
 Letting the rank tongue blossom into  
     speech.]  
 Setebos, Setebos, and Setebos!  
 'Thinketh, He dwelleth i' the cold o' the  
     moon.

'Thinketh He made it, with the sun to  
     match,  
 But not the stars; the stars came other-  
     wise;  
 Only made clouds, winds, meteors, such  
     as that:  
 Also this isle, what lives and grows  
     thereon,  
 And snaky sea which rounds and ends the  
     same.

'Thinketh, it came of being ill at ease:  
 He hated that He cannot change His  
   cold,  
 Nor cure its ache. 'Hath spied an icy  
   fish  
 That longed to 'scape the rock-stream  
   where she lived,  
 And thaw herself within the lukewarm  
   brine  
 O' the lazy sea her stream thrusts far  
   amid,  
 A crystal spike 'twixt two warm walls  
   of wave;  
 Only, she ever sickened, found repulse  
 At the other kind of water, not her life,  
 (Green-dense and dim-delicious, bred o'  
   the sun.)  
 Flounced back from bliss she was not born  
   to breathe,  
 And in her old bounds buried her despair,  
 Hating and loving warmth alike: so He.

'Thinketh, He made thereat the sun, this  
   isle,  
 Trees and the fowls here, beast and creep-  
   ing thing.  
 Yon otter, sleek-wet, black, lithe as a  
   leech;  
 Yon auk, one fire-eye in a ball of foam,  
 That floats and feeds; a certain badger  
   brown  
 He hath watched hunt with that slant  
   whitewedge eye  
 By moonlight; and the pie with the long  
   tongue  
 That pricks deep into oakwarts for a  
   worm,  
 And says a plain word when she finds  
   her prize,  
 But will not eat the ants; and ants them-  
   selves  
 That build a wall of seeds and settled  
   stalks  
 About their hole — He made all these and  
   more,  
 Made all we see, and us, in spite: how  
   else?  
 He could not, Himself, make a second  
   self  
 To be His mate; as well have made  
   Himself:  
 He would not make what He mislikes or  
   slights,  
 An eyesore to Him, or not worth His  
   pains:  
 But did, in envy, listlessness or sport,

Make what Himself would fain, in a  
   manner, be —  
 Weaker in most points, stronger in a few,  
 Worthy, and yet mere playthings all the  
   while,  
 Things He admires and mocks too, —  
   that is it.  
 Because, so brave, so better though they  
   be,  
 It nothing skills if He begin to plague.  
 Look now, I melt a gourd-fruit into mash,  
 Add honeycomb and pods, I have per-  
   ceived,  
 Which bite like finches when they bill and  
   kiss, —  
 Then, when froth rises bladdery, drink up  
   all,  
 Quick, quick, till maggots scamper  
   through my brain;  
 Last, throw me on my back i' the seeded  
   thyme,  
 And wanton, wishing I were born a bird,  
 Put case, unable to be what I wish,  
 I yet could make a live bird out of clay:  
 Would not I take clay, pinch my Caliban  
 Able to fly? — for, there, see, he hath  
   wings,  
 And great comb like the hoopoe's to ad-  
   mire,  
 And there, a sting to do his foes offence,  
 There, and I will that he begin to live,  
 Fly to yon rock-top, nip me off the horns  
 Of grigs high up that make the merry din  
 Saucy through their veined wings, and  
   mind me not.  
 In which feat, if his leg snapped, brittle  
   clay,  
 And he lay stupid-like,— why I should  
   laugh;  
 And if he, spying me should fall to weep,  
 Beseech me to be good, repair his wrong,  
 Bid his poor leg smart less or grow  
   again, —  
 Well, as the chance were this might take  
   or else  
 Not take my fancy: I might hear his cry  
 And give the manikin three sound legs  
   for one,  
 Or pluck the other off, leave him like an  
   egg,  
 And lessoned he was mine and merely clay.  
 Were this no pleasure lying in the thyme,  
 Drinking the mash, with brain become  
   alive  
 Making and marring clay at will? So  
   He.

'Thinketh such shows nor right nor wrong  
 in Him,  
 Nor kind nor cruel: He is strong and  
 Lord.  
 'Am strong myself compared to yonder  
 crabs  
 That march now from the mountain to  
 the sea;  
 'Let twenty pass and stone the twenty-  
 first,  
 Loving not, hating not, just choosing so.  
 'Say, the first straggler that boasts purple  
 spots  
 Shall join the file, one pincer twisted off;  
 'Say this bruised fellow shall receive a  
 worm,  
 And two worms he whose nippers end in  
 red;  
 As it likes me each time I do: so He.

Well then, 'supposeth He is good i' the  
 main,  
 Placable if His mind and ways were  
 guessed,  
 But rougher than His handiwork, be sure!  
 Oh, He hath made things worthier than  
 Himself,  
 And envieth that, so helped, such things  
 do more  
 Than He who made them! What con-  
 soles but this?  
 That they, unless through Him, do  
 naught at all,  
 And must submit: what other use in  
 things?  
 'Hath cut a pipe of pithless elder-joint  
 That, blown through, gives exact the  
 scream o' the jay  
 When from her wing you twitch the  
 feathers blue:  
 Sound this, and little birds that hate the  
 jay  
 Flock within stone's throw, glad their  
 foe is hurt:  
 Put case such pipe could prattle and  
 boast forsooth,  
 "I catch the birds, I am the crafty thing,  
 I make the cry my maker cannot make  
 With his great round mouth; he must  
 blow through mine!"  
 Would not I smash it with my foot? So  
 He.

But wherefore rough, why cold and ill  
 at ease?  
 Aha, that is a question! Ask, for that,

What knows, — the something over Sete-  
 bos  
 That made Him, or He, may be, found  
 and fought,  
 Worsted, drove off and did to nothing,  
 perchance.  
 There may be something quiet o'er His  
 head,  
 Out of His reach, that feels nor joy nor  
 grief,  
 Since both derive from weakness in some  
 way.  
 I joy because the quails come; would  
 not joy  
 Could I bring quails here when I have a  
 mind:  
 This Quiet, all it hath a mind to, doth.  
 'Esteemeth stars the outposts of its  
 couch,  
 But never spends much thought nor care  
 that way.  
 It may look up, work up, the worse for  
 those  
 It works on! 'Careth but for Setebos  
 The many-handed as a cuttle-fish,  
 Who, making Himself feared through  
 what He does,  
 Looks up, first, and perceives he cannot  
 soar  
 To what is quiet and hath happy life;  
 Next looks down here, and out of very  
 spite  
 Makes this a bauble-world to ape yon  
 real,  
 These good things to match those as hips  
 do grapes.  
 'Tis solace making baubles, ay, and sport.  
 Himself peeped late, eyed Prosper at his  
 books  
 Careless and lofty, lord now of the isle:  
 Vexed, 'stitched a book of broad leaves,  
 arrow-shaped,  
 Wrote thereon, he knows what, prodigious  
 words;  
 Has peeled a wand and called it by a  
 name;  
 Wearth at whiles for an enchanter's  
 robe  
 The eyed skin of a supple oncelot;  
 And hath an ounce sleeker than young-  
 ling mole,  
 A four-legged serpent he makes cower and  
 couch,  
 Now snarl, now hold its breath and  
 mind his eye,  
 And saith she is Miranda and my wife:



'Keeps for his Ariel a tall pouch-bill crane  
He bids go wade for fish and straight  
disgorge;

Also a sea-beast, lumpish, which he  
snared,

Blinded the eyes of and brought some-  
what tame,

And split its toe-webs, and now pens the  
drudge

In a hole o' the rock, and calls him Cali-  
ban;

A bitter heart that bides its time and  
bites.

'Plays thus at being Prosper in a way.

Taketh his mirth with make-believes: so  
He.

His dam held that the Quiet made all  
things

Which Setebos vexed only: 'holds not  
so.

Who made them weak, meant weakness  
He might vex.

Had He meant other, while His hand  
was in,

Why not make horny eyes no thorn could  
prick,

Or plate my scalp with bone against  
the snow,

Or overscale my flesh 'neath joint and  
joint

Like an orc's armor? Ay, — so spoil His  
sport!

He is the One now: only He doth all.

'Saith, He may like, perchance, what  
profits him.

Ay, himself loves what does him good;  
but why?

'Gets good no otherwise. This blinded  
beast

Loves whoso places flesh-meat on his  
nose,

But, had he eyes, would want no help,  
but hate

Or love, just as it liked him: he hath  
eyes.

Also it pleases Setebos to work,  
Use all His hands, and exercise much  
craft,

By no means for the love of what is  
worked.

'Tasteth himself, no finer good i' the  
world

When all goes right, in this safe summer-  
time,

And he wants little, hungers, aches not  
much,

Than trying what to do with wit and  
strength.

'Falls to make something: 'piled yon  
pile of turfs,

And squared and stuck there squares of  
soft white chalk,

And, with a fish-tooth, scratched a moon  
on each,

And set up endwise certain spikes of  
tree,

And crowned the whole with a sloth's  
skull a-top,

Found dead i' the woods, too hard for one  
to kill.

No use at all i' the work, for work's sole  
sake;

'Shall some day knock it down again: so  
He.

'Saith He is terrible: watch His feats in  
proof!

One hurricane will spoil six good months'  
hope.

He hath a spite against me, that I know.

Just as He favors Prosper, who knows  
why?

So it is, all the same, as well I find.

'Wove wattles half the winter, fenced  
them firm

With stone and stake to stop she-tor-  
toises

Crawling to lay their eggs here: well,  
one wave,

Feeling the foot of Him upon its neck,  
Gaped as a snake does, lolled out its large  
tongue,

And licked the whole labor flat: so much  
for spite.

'Saw a ball flame down late (yonder it lies)  
Where half an hour before, I slept i' the  
shade:

Often they scatter sparkles: there is  
force!

'Dug up a newt He may have envied  
once

And turned to stone, shut up inside a  
stone.

Please Him and hinder this? — What  
Prosper does?

Aha, if He would tell me how! Not He!  
There is the sport: discover how or die!

All need not die, for of the things o' the  
isle

Some flee afar, some dive, some run up  
trees;

Those at His mercy, — why they please  
Him most

When . . . when . . . well, never try  
the same way twice!

Repeat what act has pleased, He may  
grow wroth.

You must not know His ways, and play  
Him off,

Sure of the issue. Doth the like himself:  
'Spareth a squirrel that it nothing fears

But steals the nut from underneath my  
thumb,

And when I threat, bites stoutly in de-  
fence:

'Spareth an urchin that contrariwise,  
Curls up into a ball, pretending death  
For fright at my approach: the two ways  
please.

But what would move my choler more  
than this,

That either creature counted on its life  
To-morrow and next day and all days to  
come

Saying, forsooth, in the inmost of its  
heart,

"Because he did so yesterday with me,  
And otherwise with such another brute,  
So must he do henceforth and always." —  
Ay?

Would teach the reasoning couple what  
"must" means!

'Doth as he likes, or wherefore Lord?  
So He.

'Conceiveth all things will continue thus,  
And we shall have to live in fear of Him  
So long as He lives, keeps his strength:  
no change,

If He have done His best, make no new  
world

To please Him more, so leave off watch-  
ing this, —

If He surprise not even the Quiet's self  
Some strange day, — or, suppose, grow  
into it

As grubs grow butterflies: else, here we  
are,

And there is He, and nowhere help at all.

'Believeth with the life, the pain shall  
stop.

His dam held different, that after death  
He both plagued enemies and feasted  
friends:

Idly! He doth His worst in this our life.  
Giving just respite lest we die through  
pain,

Saving last pain for worst, — with which,  
and end.

Meanwhile, the best way to escape His ire  
Is, not to seem too happy. 'Sees, him-  
self,

Yonder two flies, with purple films and  
pink,

Bask on the pompion-bell above: kills  
both.

'Sees two black painful beetles roll their  
ball

On head and tail as if to save their lives:  
Moves them the stick away they strive  
to clear.

Even so, 'would have him misconceive,  
suppose

This Caliban strives hard and ails no less,  
And always, above all else, envies Him;  
Wherefore he mainly dances on dark  
nights,

Moans in the sun, gets under holes to  
laugh,

And never speaks his mind save housed  
as now:

Outside, 'groans, curses. If He caught  
me here,

O'erheard this speech, and asked "What  
chucklest at?"

'Would, to appease Him, cut a finger off,  
Or of my three kid yearlings burn the best.  
Or let the toothsome apples rot on tree,  
Or push my tame beast for the orc to  
taste:

While myself lit a fire, and made a song  
And sung it, "*What I hate, be consecrate,  
To celebrate Thee and Thy state, no mate  
For Thee; what see for envy in poor me?*"

Hoping the while, since evils sometimes  
mend,

Warts rub away and sores are cured with  
slime,

That some strange day, will either the  
Quiet catch

And conquer Setebos, or likelier He  
Decrepit may doze, doze, as good as die.

[What, what? A curtain o'er the world  
at once!

Crickets stop hissing; not a bird — or,  
yes,

There scuds His raven that has told Him  
all!

It was fool's play, this prattling! Ha!  
 The wind  
 Shoulders the pillared dust, death's house  
 o' the move,  
 And fast invading fires begin! White  
 blaze —  
 A tree's head snaps — and there, there,  
 there, there, there,  
 Hithunder follows! Fool to gibe at  
 Him!  
 Lo! 'Lieth flat and loveth Setebos!  
 'Maketh his teeth meet through his upper  
 lip,  
 Will let those quails fly, will not eat this  
 month  
 One little mess of wheelks, so he may  
 'scape!]

1864.

## CONFESSIONS

WHAT is he buzzing in my ears?  
 "Now that I come to die,  
 Do I view the world as a vale of tears?"  
 Ah, reverend sir, not I!

What I viewed there once, what I view  
 again  
 Where the physic bottles stand  
 On the table's edge, — is a suburb lane,  
 With a wall to my bedside hand.

That lane sloped, much as the bottles do,  
 From a house you could descry  
 O'er the garden-wall; is the curtain blue  
 Or green to a healthy eye?

To mine, it serves for the old June weather  
 Blue above lane and wall;  
 And that farthest bottle labelled "Ether"  
 Is the house o'ertopping all.

At a terrace, somewhere near the stopper,  
 There watched for me, one June,  
 A girl: I know, sir, it's improper,  
 My poor mind's out of tune.

Only, there was a way . . . you crept  
 Close by the side, to dodge  
 Eyes in the house, two eyes except:  
 They styled their house "The Lodge."

What right had a lounge up their lane?  
 But, by creeping very close,  
 With the good wall's help, — their eyes  
 might strain  
 And stretch themselves to Oes,

Yet never catch her and me together,  
 As she left the attic, there,  
 By the rim of the bottle labelled "Ether,"  
 And stole from stair to stair,

And stood by the rose-wreathed gate  
 Alas,  
 We loved, sir — used to meet:  
 How sad and bad and mad it was —  
 But, then, how it was sweet! 1864.

## YOUTH AND ART

IT once might have been, once only:  
 We lodged in a street together,  
 You, a sparrow on the house top lonely,  
 I, a lone she-bird of his feather.

Your trade was with sticks and clay,  
 You thumbed, thrust, patted and  
 polished,  
 Then laughed "They will see some day  
 Smith made, and Gibson demolished."

My business was song, song, song;  
 I chirped, cheeped, trilled and twit-  
 tered.  
 "Kate Brown's on the boards ere long,  
 And Grisi's existence embittered!"

I earned no more by a warble  
 Than you by a sketch in plaster:  
 You wanted a piece of marble,  
 I needed a music-master.

We studied hard in our styles,  
 Chipped each at a crust like Hindoos,  
 For air, looked out on the tiles,  
 For fun, watched each other's windows.

You lounged, like a boy of the South,  
 Cap and blouse — nay, a bit of beard  
 too:  
 Or you got it, rubbing your mouth  
 With fingers the clay adhered to.

And I — soon managed to find  
 Weak points in the flower-fence facing  
 Was forced to put up a blind  
 And be safe in my corset-lacing.

No harm! It was not my fault  
 If you never turned your eye's tail up  
 As I shook upon E *in alt*,  
 Or ran the chromatic scale up:

For spring bade the sparrows pair,  
And the boys and girls gave guesses,  
And stalls in our street looked rare  
With bulrush and watercresses.

Why did not you pinch a flower  
In a pellet of clay and fling it?  
Why did not I put a power  
Of thanks in a look, or sing it?

I did look, sharp as a lynx,  
(And yet the memory rankles,)  
When models arrived, some minx  
Tripped up-stairs, she and her ankles.

But I think I gave you as good!  
"That foreign fellow, — who can know  
How she pays, in a playful mood,  
For his tuning her that piano?"

Could you say so, and never say,  
"Suppose we join hands and fortunes  
And I fetch her from over the way,  
Her, piano, and long tunes and short  
tunes?"

No, no: you would not be rash,  
Nor I rasher and something over:  
You've to settle yet Gibson's hash,  
And Grisi yet lives in clover.

But you meet the Prince at the Board,  
I'm queen myself at *bals-paré*,  
I've married a rich old lord,  
And you're dubbed knight and an R. A.

Each life unfulfilled, you see;  
It hangs still, patchy and scrappy:  
We have not sighed deep, laughed free,  
Starved, feasted, despaired, — been  
happy.

And nobody calls you a dunce,  
And people suppose me clever:  
This could but have happened once,  
And we missed it, lost it forever.  
1864.

#### A FACE

IF one could have that little head of hers  
Painted upon a background of pale gold,  
Such as the Tuscan's early art prefers!  
No shade encroaching on the matchless  
mould  
Of those two lips, which should be open-  
ing soft

In the pure profile: not as when she  
laughs,  
For that spoils all: but rather as if aloft  
Yon hyacinth, she loves so, leaned its  
staff's  
Burden of honey-colored buds to kiss  
And capture 'twixt the lips apart for  
this.  
Then her lithe neck, three fingers might  
surround,  
How it should waver on the pale gold  
ground  
Up to the fruit-shaped, perfect chin it  
lifts!  
I know, Correggio loves to mass, in rifts  
Of heaven, his angel faces orb on orb  
Breaking its outline, burning shades  
absorb:  
But these are only massed there, I should  
think,  
Waiting to see some wonder momentarily  
Grow out, stand full, fade slow against  
the sky  
(That's the pale ground you'd see this  
sweet face by),  
All heaven, meanwhile, condensed into  
one eye  
Which fears to lose the wonder, should it  
wink.  
1864.

#### PROSPICE

FEAR death? — to feel the fog in my  
throat,  
The mist in my face,  
When the snows begin, and the blasts  
denote  
I am nearing the place,  
The power of the night, the press of the  
storm,  
The post of the foe;  
Where he stands, the Arch Fear in a  
visible form,  
Yet the strong man must go:  
For the journey is done and the summit  
attained,  
And the barriers fall,  
Though a battle's to fight ere the guerdon  
be gained,  
The reward of it all.  
I was ever a fighter, so — one fight more,  
The best and the last!  
I would hate that death bandaged my  
eyes, and forebore,  
And bade me creep past.

No! let me taste the whole of it, fare  
like my peers  
The heroes of old,  
Bear the brunt, in a minute pay glad  
life's arrears

Of pain, darkness and cold.  
For sudden the worst turns the best to  
the brave,

The black minute's at end,  
And the elements' rage, the fiend-voices  
that rave,

Shall dwindle, shall blend,  
Shall change, shall become first a peace  
out of pain,

Then a light, then thy breast,  
O thou soul of my soul! I shall clasp  
thee again,

And with God be the rest! 1861. 1864.

## EPILOGUE

## TO DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

WITLESS alike of will and way divine,  
How heaven's high with earth's low  
should intertwine!

Friends, I have seen through your eyes:  
now use mine!

Take the least man of all mankind, as I;  
Look at his head and heart, find how  
and why

He differs from his fellows utterly:

Then, like me, watch when nature by  
degrees

Grows alive round him, as in Arctic seas  
(They said of old) the instinctive water  
flees

Toward some elected point of central rock,  
As though, for its sake only, roamed the  
flock

Of waves about the waste: awhile they  
mock

With radiance caught for the occasion,  
— hues

Of blackest hell now, now such reds and  
blues

As only heaven could fitly interfuse, —

The mimic monarch of the whirlpool king  
O' the current for a minute: then they  
wring

Up by the roots and oversweep the thing,

And hasten off, to play again elsewhere  
The same part, choose another peak as  
bare,

They find and flatter, feast and finish  
there.

When you see what I tell you, — nature  
dance

About each man of us, retire, advance,  
As though the pageant's end were to  
enhance

His worth, and — once the life, his pro-  
duct, gained —

Roll away elsewhere, keep the strife sus-  
tained,

And show thus real, a thing the North but  
feigned —

When you acknowledge that one world  
could do

All the diverse work, old yet ever new,  
Divide us, each from other, me from  
you, —

Why, where's the need of Temple, when  
the walls

O' the world are that? What use of  
swells and falls

From Levites' choir, Priests' cries, and  
trumpet-calls?

That one Face, far from vanish, rather  
grows,

Or decomposes but to recompose,  
Become my universe that feels and  
knows! 1864.

DEDICATION OF THE RING AND  
THE BOOK

## END OF BOOK I

SUCH, British Public, ye who like me not,  
(God love you!) — whom I yet have  
labored for,

Perchance more careful whoso runs may  
read

Than erst when all, it seemed, could  
read who ran, —

Perchance more careless whoso reads may  
praise

Than late when he who praised and read  
and wrote

Was apt to find himself the selfsame me, —  
Such labor had such issue, so I wrought



This arc, by furtherance of such alloy,  
And so, by one spirt, take away its trace  
Till, justifiably golden, rounds my ring.

A ring without a posy, and that ring  
mine?

O lyric Love, half angel and half bird  
And all a wonder and a wild desire, —  
Boldest of hearts that ever braved the sun,  
Took sanctuary within the holier blue,  
And sang a kindred soul out to his face, —  
Yet human at the red-ripe of the heart —  
When the first summons from the dark-  
ling earth

Reached thee amid thy chambers,  
blanched their blue,  
And bared them of the glory — to drop  
down,

To toil for man, to suffer or to die, —  
This is the same voice: can thy soul  
know change?

Hail then, and harken from the realms  
of help!

Never may I commence my song, my due  
To God who best taught song by gift of  
thee,

Except with bent head and beseeching  
hand —

That still, despite the distance and the  
dark.

What was, again may be; some inter-  
change

Of grace, some splendor once thy very  
thought.

Some benediction anciently thy smile:  
— Never conclude, but raising hand and  
head

Thither where eyes, that cannot reach,  
yet yearn

For all hope, all sustainment, all reward,  
Their utmost up and on, — so blessing back  
In those thy realms of help, that heaven  
thy home,

Some whiteness which, I judge, thy face  
makes proud,

Some wanness where, I think, thy foot  
may fall!

1868.

## HERVÉ RIEL

### I

ON the sea and at the Hogue, sixteen  
hundred ninety-two,  
Did the English fight the French, — woe  
to France!

And, the thirty-first of May, helter-  
skelter through the blue,  
Like a crowd of frightened porpoises a  
shoal of sharks pursue,  
Came crowding ship on ship to Saint  
Malo on the Rance,  
With the English fleet in view.

### II

'Twas the squadron that escaped, with  
the victor in full chase;  
First and foremost of the drove, in his  
great ship, Damfreville;  
Close on him fled, great and small,  
Twenty-two good ships in all;  
And they signalled to the place  
"Help the winner of a race!  
Get us guidance, give us harbor, take  
us quick — or, quicker still,  
Here 's the English can and will!"

### III

Then the pilots of the place put out brisk  
and leaped on board;  
"Why what hope or chance have ships  
like these to pass?" laughed they:  
"Rocks to starboard, rocks to port, all  
the passage scarred and scored,  
Shall the 'Formidable' here with her  
twelve and eighty guns  
Think to make the river-mouth by the  
single narrow way,  
Trust to enter where 'tis ticklish for a  
craft of twenty tons,  
And with flow at full beside?  
Now, 'tis slackest ebb of tide.  
Reach the mooring? Rather say,  
While rock stands or water runs,  
Not a ship will leave the bay!"

### IV

Then was called a council straight.  
Brief and bitter the debate:  
"Here's the English at our heels; would  
you have them take in tow  
All that's left us of the fleet, linked to-  
gether stern and bow,  
For a prize to Plymouth Sound?  
Better run the ships aground!"  
(Ended Damfreville his speech).  
"Not a minute more to wait!  
Let the Captains all and each  
Shove ashore, then blow up, burn the  
vessels on the beach!  
France must undergo her fate.

## V

"Give the word!" But no such word  
Was ever spoke or heard:

For up stood, for out stepped, for in  
struck amid all these

— A Captain? A Lieutenant? A Mate  
— first, second, third?

No such man of mark, and meet  
With his betters to compete!

But a simple Breton sailor pressed by  
Tourville for the fleet,

A poor coasting-pilot he, Hervé Riel the  
Croisickese.

## VI

And "What mockery or malice have we  
here?" cries Hervé Riel:

"Are you mad, you Malouins? Are  
you cowards, fools, or rogues?

Talk to me of rocks and shoals, me who  
took the soundings, tell

On my fingers every bank, every shal-  
low, every swell,

'Twixt the offing here and Grève where  
the river disembogues?

Are you bought by English gold? Is it  
love the lying's for?

Morn and eve, night and day,  
Have I piloted your bay,

Entered free and anchored fast at the  
foot of Solidor.

Burn the fleet and ruin France? That  
were worse than fifty Hagues!

Sirs, they know I speak the truth!

Sirs, believe me there's a way!

Only let me lead the line,

Have the biggest ship to steer,

Get this 'Formidable' clear,

Make the others follow mine,

And I lead them, most and least, by a  
passage I know well,

Right to Solidor past Grève,

And there lay them safe and sound:

And if one ship misbehave,

— Keel so much as grate the ground,  
Why I've nothing but my life, — here's  
my head!" cries Hervé Riel.

## VII

Not a minute more to wait,

"Steer us in, then, small and great!

Take the helm, lead the line, save the  
squadron!" cried its chief.

Captains, give the sailor place!

He is Admiral, in brief.

Still the north-wind, by God's grace!

See the noble fellow's face

As the big ship, with a bound,

Clears the entry like a hound,

Keeps the passage as its inch of way were  
the wide sea's profound!

See, safe through shoal and rock,

How they follow in a flock,

Not a ship that misbehaves, not a keel  
that grates the ground,

Not a spar that comes to grief!

The peril, see, is past,

All are harbored to the last,

And just as Hervé Riel hollas "Anchor!"

— sure as fate,

Up the English come, — too late!

## VIII

So, the storm subsides to calm:

They see the green trees wave

On the heights o'erlooking Grève.

Hearts that bled are stanch'd with balm.

"Just our rapture to enhance,

Let the English rake the bay,

Gnash their teeth and glare askance

As they cannonade away!

'Neath rampired Solidor pleasant riding  
on the Rance!"

How hope succeeds despair on each Cap-  
tain's countenance!

Out burst all with one accord,

"This is Paradise for Hell!

Let France, let France's King

Thank the man that did the thing!"

What a shout, and all one word,

"Hervé Riel!"

As he stepped in front once more,

Not a symptom of surprise

In the frank blue Breton eyes,

Just the same man as before.

## IX

Then said Damfreville. "My friend,  
I must speak out at the end,

Though I find the speaking hard.

Praise is deeper than the lips:

You have saved the King his ships,

You must name your own reward.

'Faith, our sun was near eclipse!

Demand whate'er you will,

France remains your debtor still.

Ask to heart's content and have! or my  
name's not Damfreville."

## x

Then a beam of fun outbroke  
 On the bearded mouth that spoke,  
 As the honest heart laughed through  
 Those frank eyes of Breton blue :  
 "Since I needs must say my say,  
 Since on board the duty's done,  
 And from Malo Roads to Croisic Point,  
 what is it but a run? —  
 Since 'tis ask and have, I may —  
 Since the others go ashore —  
 Come! A good whole holiday!  
 Leave to go and see my wife, whom I  
 call the Belle Aurore!"  
 That he asked and that he got, — nothing  
 more.

## xi

Name and deed alike are lost :  
 Not a pillar nor a post  
 In his Croisic keeps alive the feat as it  
 befell;  
 Not a head in white and black  
 On a single fishing-smack.  
 In memory of the man but for whom  
 had gone to wrack  
 All that France saved from the fight  
 whence England bore the bell.  
 Go to Paris: rank on rank  
 Search the heroes flung pell-mell  
 On the Louvre, face and flank!  
 You shall look long enough ere you come  
 to Hervé Riel.  
 So, for better and for worse,  
 Hervé Riel, accept my verse,  
 In my verse, Hervé Riel, do thou once  
 more  
 Save the squadron, honor France, love  
 thy wife, the Belle Aurore! 1871

## FIFINE AT THE FAIR

## PROLOGUE

## AMPHIBIAN

THE fancy I had to-day,  
 Fancy which turned a fear!  
 I swam far out in the bay,  
 Since waves laughed warm and clear.

I lay and looked at the sun,  
 The noon-sun looked at me :  
 Between us two, no one  
 Live creature, that I could see.

Yes! There came floating by  
 Me, who lay floating too,  
 Such a strange butterfly!  
 Creature as dear as new :

Because the membraned wings  
 So wonderful, so wide,  
 So sun-suffused, were things  
 Like soul and naught beside.

A handbreadth overhead!  
 All of the sea my own,  
 It owned the sky instead;  
 Both of us were alone.

I never shall join its flight,  
 For, naught buoys flesh in air.  
 If it touch the sea — good night!  
 Death sure and swift waits there.

Can the insect feel the better  
 For watching the uncouth play  
 Of limbs that slip the fetter,  
 Pretend as they were not clay?

Undoubtedly I rejoice  
 That the air comports so well  
 With a creature which had the choice  
 Of the land once. Who can tell?

What if a certain soul  
 Which early slipped its sheath,  
 And has for its home the whole  
 Of heaven, thus look beneath,

Thus watch one who, in the world,  
 Both lives and likes life's way,  
 Nor wishes the wings unfurled  
 That sleep in the worm, they say?

But sometimes when the weather  
 Is blue, and warm waves tempt  
 To free one's self of tether,  
 And try a life exempt

From worldly noise and dust,  
 In the sphere which overbrims  
 With passion and thought, — why, just  
 Unable to fly, one swims!

By passion and thought upborne,  
 One smiles to one's self — "They fare  
 Scarce better, they need not scorn  
 Our sea, who live in the air!"

Emancipate through passion  
And thought, with sea for sky,  
We substitute, in a fashion,  
For heaven — poetry :

Which sea, to all intent,  
Gives flesh such noon-disport  
As a finer element  
Affords the spirit-sort.

Whatever they are, we seem :  
Imagine the thing they know ;  
All deeds they do, we dream ;  
Can heaven be else but so ?

And meantime, yonder streak  
Meets the horizon's verge ;  
That is the land, to seek  
If we tire or dread the surge

Land the solid and safe —  
To welcome again (confess !)  
When, high and dry, we chafe  
The body, and don the dress.

Does she look, pity, wonder  
At one who mimics flight,  
Swims — heaven above, sea under,  
Yet always earth in sight ?

## EPILOGUE

## THE HOUSEHOLDER

SAVAGE I was sitting in my house, late,  
lone :

Dreary, weary with the long day's work :  
Head of me, heart of me, stupid as a stone :  
Tongue-tied now, now blaspheming  
like a Turk ;

When, in a moment, just a knock, call,  
cry,

Half a pang and all a rapture, there  
again were we ! —

"What and is it really you again?"  
quoth I :

"I again, what else did you expect?"  
quoth She.

"Never mind, hie away from this old  
house —

Every crumbling brick embrowned  
with sin and shame !

Quick, in its corners ere certain shapes  
arouse !

Let them — every devil of the night —  
lay claim,

Make and mend, or rap and rend, for  
me ! Good-by !

God be their guard from disturbance  
at their glee,

Till, crash, comes down the carcass in a  
heap !" quoth I :

"Nay, but there's a decency required !"   
quoth She.

"Ah, but if you knew how time has  
dragged, days, nights !

All the neighbor-talk with man and  
maid — such men !

All the fuss and trouble of street-sounds,  
window-sights :

All the worry of flapping door and echo-  
ing roof ; and then,

All the fancies . . . Who were they had  
leave, dared try

Darker arts that almost struck despair  
in me ?

If you knew but how I dwelt down here !"   
quoth I :

"And was I so better off up there?"   
quoth She.

"Help and get it over ! *Reunited to his  
wife*

(How draw up the paper lets the parish  
people know ?)

*Lies M. or N., departed from this life,  
Day the this or that, month and year the  
so and so.*

What i' the way of final flourish ? Prose,  
verse ? Try !

*Affliction sore long time he bore*, or, what  
is it to be ?

*Till God did please to grant him ease.*  
Do end !" quoth I :

"I end with — Love is all, and Death  
is nought !" quoth She. 1872.

## HOUSE

SHALL I sonnet-sing you about myself ?

Do I live in a house you would like to  
see ?

Is it scant of gear, has it store of pelf ?

"Unlock my heart with a sonnet-key ?"

Invite the world, as my betters have  
done ?

"Take notice : this building remains on  
view,

Its suites of reception every one,  
Its private apartment and bedroom too ;

"For a ticket, apply to the Publisher."  
No: thanking the public, I must decline.

A peep through my window, if folk prefer;  
But, please you, no foot over threshold  
of mine!

I have mixed with a crowd and heard  
free talk  
In a foreign land where an earthquake  
chanced

And a house stood gaping, naught to balk  
Man's eye wherever he gazed or glanced.

The whole of the frontage shaven sheer,  
The inside gaped: exposed to day,  
Right and wrong and common and queer,  
Bare, as the palm of your hand, it lay.

The owner? Oh, he had been crushed,  
no doubt!

"Odd tables and chairs for a man of  
wealth!

What a parcel of musty old books about!  
He smoked, — no wonder he lost his  
health!

"I doubt if he bathed before he dressed.  
A brasier? — the pagan, he burned  
perfumes!

You see it is proved, what the neighbors  
guessed:

His wife and himself had separate  
rooms."

Friends, the good man of the house at  
least

Kept house to himself till an earth-  
quake came:

'Tis the fall of its frontage permits you  
feast

On the inside arrangement you praise  
or blame.

Outside should suffice for evidence:

And whoso desires to penetrate  
Deeper, must dive by the spirit-sense —  
No optics like yours, at any rate!

"Hoity-toity! A street to explore,  
Your house the exception! '*With this  
same key*

*Shakespeare unlocked his heart!*'"  
Once more,

*Did Shakespeare?* If so, the less  
Shakespeare he!

1876.

## FEARS AND SCRUPLES

HERE'S my case. Of old I used to love  
him,

This same unseen friend, before I  
knew:

Dream there was none like him, none  
above him, —

Wake to hope and trust my dream was  
true.

Loved I not his letters full of beauty?

Not his actions famous far and wide?  
Absent, he would know I vowed him  
duty;

Present, he would find me at his side.

Pleasant fancy! for I had but letters,

Only knew of actions by hearsay:  
He himself was busied with my betters;  
What of that? My turn must come  
some day.

"Some day" proving — no day! Here's  
the puzzle.

Passed and passed my turn is. Why  
complain?

He's so busied! If I could but muzzle  
People's foolish mouths that give me  
pain!

"Letters?" (hear them!) "You a judge  
of writing?

Ask the experts! How they shake the  
head

O'er these characters, your friend's in-  
diting —

Call them forgery from A to Z!

"Actions? Where's your certain proof?"  
(they bother)

"He, of all you find so great and  
good,

He, he only, claims this, that, the other  
Action — claimed by men, a multi-  
tude?"

I can simply wish I might refute you,  
Wish my friend would, — by a word, a  
wink, —

Bid me stop that foolish mouth, — you  
brute you!

He keeps absent, — why, I cannot  
think.



Never mind! Though foolishness may  
flout me,  
One thing's sure enough: 'tis neither  
frost,

No, nor fire, shall freeze or burn from  
out me

Thanks for truth — though falsehood,  
gained — though lost.

All my days, I'll go the softlier, sadlier,  
For that dream's sake! How forget  
the thrill

Through and through me as I thought  
"The gladlier

Lives my friend because I love himstill!"

Ah, but there's a menace some one utters!  
"What and if your friend at home play  
tricks?

Peep at hide-and-seek behind the shutters?  
Mean your eyes should pierce through  
solid bricks?

"What and if he, frowning, wake you,  
dreamy?

Lay on you the blame that bricks —  
conceal?

Say, '*At least I saw who did not see me,  
Does see now, and presently shall feel*'?

"Why, that makes your friend a mon-  
ster!" say you:

"Had his house no window? At first  
nod,

Would you not have hailed him?"  
Hush, I pray you!

What if this friend happened to be —  
God?

1876.

### NATURAL MAGIC

ALL I can say is — I saw it!  
The room was as bare as your hand.  
I locked in the swarth little lady, — I  
swear,

From the head to the foot of her — well,  
quite as bare!

"No Nautch shall cheat me," said I, "tak-  
ing my stand

At this bolt which I draw!" And this  
bolt — I withdraw it,

And there laughs the lady, not bare, but  
embowered

With — who knows what verdure, o'er-  
fruited, o'erflowered?

Impossible! Only — I saw it!

All I can sing is — I feel it!

This life was as blank as that room;

I let you pass in here. Precaution, in-  
deed?

Walls, ceiling and floor, — not a chance  
for a weed!

Wide opens the entrance: where's cold  
now, where's gloom?

No May to sow seed here, no June to  
reveal it,

Behold you enshrined in these blooms of  
your bringing,

These fruits of your bearing — nay, birds  
of your winging!

A fairy-tale! Only — I feel it! 1876.

### MAGICAL NATURE

FLOWER — I never fancied, jewel — I  
profess you!

Bright I see and soft I feel the outside  
of a flower.

Save but glow inside and — jewel, I  
should guess you,

Dim to sight and rough to touch: the  
glory is the dower.

You, forsooth, a flower? Nay, my love,  
a jewel —

Jewel at no mercy of a moment in  
your prime!

Time may fray the flower-face: kind be  
time or cruel,

Jewel, from each facet, flash your  
laugh at time!

1876.

### APPEARANCES

AND so you found that poor room dull,  
Dark, hardly to your taste, my dear?

Its features seemed unbeautiful:

But this I know — 'twas there, not  
here,

You plighted troth to me, the word

Which — ask that poor room how it  
heard.

And this rich room obtains your praise  
Unqualified, — so bright, so fair,

So all whereat perfection stays?

Ay, but remember — here, not there,

The other word was spoken! — Ask

This rich room how you dropped the  
mask!

1876.

## EPILOGUE

TO THE PACCHIAROTTO VOLUME

μεστοὶ . . .

οἱ δ' ἀμφορῆς οἴνου μέλανος ἀνθοσμίον.

"THE poets pour us wine —"

Said the dearest poet I ever knew,  
Dearest and greatest and best to me.  
You clamor athirst for poetry —  
We pour. "But when shall a vintage  
be" —

You cry — "strong grape, squeezed gold  
from screw,  
Yet sweet juice, flavored flowery-fine?  
That were indeed the wine!"

One pours your cup — stark strength.

Meat for a man; and you eye the  
pulp  
Strained, turbid still, from the viscous  
blood  
Of the snaky bough: and you grumble  
"Good!

For it swells resolve, breeds hardihood;  
Dispatch it, then, in a single gulp!"  
So, down, with a wry face, goes at length  
The liquor: stuff for strength.

One pours your cup — sheer sweet,

The fragrant fumes of a year condensed:

Suspicion of all that's ripe or rathe,  
From the bud on branch to the grass in  
swathe,

"We suck mere milk of the seasons,"  
saith

A curl of each nostril — "dew, dis-  
persed

Nowise for nerving man to feat:  
Boys sip such honeyed sweet!"

And thus who wants wine strong,

Waves each sweet smell of the year  
away;

Who likes to swoon as the sweets suffuse  
His brain with a mixture of beams and  
dews

Turned syrupy drink — rough strength  
eschews;

"What though in our veins your wine-  
stock stay?

The lack of the bloom does our palate  
wrong.

Give us wine sweet, not strong!"

Yet wine is — some affirm —

Prime wine is found in the world some-  
where,

Of portable strength with sweet to match.  
You double your heart its dose, yet  
catch —

As the draught descends — a violet-  
smatch,

Softness — however it came there,  
Through drops expressed by the fire and  
worm:

Strong sweet wine — some affirm.

Body and bouquet both?

'Tis easy to ticket a bottle so;  
But what was the case in the cask, my  
friends?

Cask? Nay, the vat — where the maker  
mends

His strong with his sweet (you suppose)  
and blends

His rough with his smooth, till none  
can know

How it comes you may tipple, nothing  
loth,

Body and bouquet both.

"You" being just — the world.

No poets — who turn, themselves, the  
winch

Of the press; no critics — I'll even say,  
(Being flustered and easy of faith to-day,)

Who for love of the work have learned  
the way

Till themselves produce home-made,  
at a pinch:

No! You are the world, and wine ne'er  
purred

Except to please the world!

"For, oh the common heart!

And, ah the irremissible sin  
Of poets who please themselves, not us!  
Strong wine yet sweet wine pouring thus!  
How please still — Pindar and Æschylus!

Drink — dipped into by the bearded  
chin

Alike and the bloomy lip — no part  
Denied the common heart!

"And might we get such grace,

And did you moderns but stock our  
vault

With the true half-brandied half-attar-gul,  
How would seniors indulge at a hearty  
pull

While juniors tossed off their thimbleful!  
 Our Shakespeare and Milton escaped  
 your fault,  
 So, they reign supreme o'er the weaker  
 race  
 That wants the ancient grace!"

If I paid myself with words  
 (As the French say well) I were dupe  
 indeed!

I were found in belief that you quaffed  
 and bowed

At your Shakespeare the whole day long,  
 caroused

In your Milton pottle-deep nor drowsed  
 A moment of night — toped on, took  
 heed

Of nothing like modern cream-and-curd.  
 Pay me with deeds, not words!

For — see your cellarage!

There are forty barrels with Shake-  
 speare's brand.

Some five or six are abroach: the rest  
 Stand spigoted, fauceted. Try and test  
 What yourselves call best of the very  
 best!

How comes it that still untouched they  
 stand?

Why don't you try tap, advance a stage  
 With the rest in the cellarage?

For — see your cellarage!

There are four big butts of Milton's  
 brew.

How comes it you make old drips and  
 drops

Do duty, and there devotion stops?

Leave such an abyss of malt and hops  
 Embellied in butts which bungs still  
 glue?

You hate your bard! A fig for your  
 rage!

Free him from cellarage!

'Tis said I brew stiff drink,

But the deuce a flavor of grape is there.  
 Hardly a May-go-down, 'tis just

A sort of a gruff Go-down-it-must —

No Merry-go-down, no gracious gust

Commingles the racy with Springtide's  
 rare!

"What wonder," say you, "that we  
 cough, and blink

At Autumn's heady drink?"

Is it a fancy, friends?

Mighty and mellow are never mixed,  
 Though mighty and mellow born at once,  
 Sweet for the future, — strong for the  
 nonce!

Stuff you should stow away, ensconce

In the deep and dark, to be found fast-  
 fixed

At the century's close: such time strength  
 spends

A-sweetening for my friends!

And then — why, what you quaff

With a smack of lip and a cluck of  
 tongue,

Is leakage and leavings — just what haps  
 From the tun some learned taster taps

With a promise "Prepare your watery  
 chaps!

Here 's properest wine for old and  
 young!

Dispute its perfection? You make us  
 laugh!

Have faith, give thanks, but —  
 quaff!"

Leakage, I say, or — worse —

Leavings suffice, pot-valiant souls.

Somebody, brimful, long ago,  
 Frothed flagon he drained to the dregs;  
 and, lo,

Down whisker and beard what an over-  
 flow!

Lick spilth that has trickled from  
 classic jowls,

Sup the single scene, sip the only verse —  
 Old wine, not new and worse!

I grant you: worse by much!

Renounce that new where you never  
 gained

One glow at heart, one gleam at head,  
 And stick to the warrant of age instead!

No dwarf's-lap! Fatten, by giants fed!  
 You fatten, with oceans of drink un-  
 drained?

You feed — who would choke did a cob-  
 web smutch

The Age you love so much?

A mine's beneath a moor:

Acres of moor roof fathoms of mine

Which diamonds dot where you please  
 to dig;

Yet who plies spade for the bright and  
 big?

Your product is — truffles, you hunt with  
a pig!

Since bright-and-big, when a man  
would dine,

Suits badly : and therefore the Kohinoor  
May sleep in mine 'neath moor!

Wine, pulse in might from me!

It may never emerge in must from vat,  
Never fill cask nor furnish can,

Never end sweet, which strong began —  
God's gift to gladden the heart of man;

But spirit's at proof, I promise that!  
No sparing of juice spoils what should be  
Fit brewage — mine for me.

Man's thoughts and loves and hates!

Earth is my vineyard, these grew there :  
From grape of the ground, I made or  
marred

My vintage; easy the task or hard,  
Who set it — his praise be my reward!

Earth's yield! Who yearn for the  
Dark Blue Sea's,

Let them "lay, pray, bray" — the addle-  
pates!

Mine be Man's thoughts, loves,  
hates!

But some one says, "Good Sir!"

('Tis a worthy versed in what concerns  
The making such labor turn out well,)

"You don't suppose that the nosegay-  
smell

Needs always come from the grape?  
Each bell

At your foot, each bud that your cul-  
ture spurns

The very cowslip would act like myrrh  
On the stiffest brew — good Sir!

"Cowslips, abundant birth

O'er meadow and hillside, vineyard too,  
— Like a schoolboy's scrawlings in and  
out

Distasteful lesson-book — all about  
Greece and Rome, victory and rout —

Love-verses instead of such vain ado!  
So, fancies frolic it o'er the earth

Where thoughts have rightlier birth.

"Nay, thoughtlings they themselves;

Loves, hates — in little and less and  
least!

Thoughts? 'What is a man beside a  
mount!'

Loves? '*Absent — poor lovers the minutes  
count!*'

Hates? '*Fie — Pope's letters to Martha  
Blount!*'

These furnish a wine for a children's  
feast :

Inspid to man, they suit the elves

Like thoughts, loves, hates them-  
selves."

And, friends, beyond dispute

I too have the cowslips dewy and dear.

Punctual as Springtide forth peep they :  
I leave them to make my meadow gay.

But I ought to pluck and impound them,  
eh?

Not let them alone, but deftly shear  
And shred and reduce to — what may  
suit

Children, beyond dispute?

And, here's May-month, all bloom,

All bounty : what if I sacrifice?

If I out with shears and shear, nor stop  
Shearing till prostrate, lo, the crop?

And will you prefer it to ginger-pop

When I've made you wine of the mem-  
ories

Which leave as bare as a churchyard  
tomb

My meadow, late all bloom?

Nay, what ingratitude

Should I hesitate to amuse the wits

That have pulled so long at my flask,  
nor grugged

The headache that paid their pains, nor  
budded

From bunghole before they sighed and  
judged

"Too rough for our taste, to-day,  
befits

The racy and right when the years con-  
clude!"

Out on ingratitude!

Grateful or ingrate — none,

No cowslip of all my fairy crew

Shall help to concoct what makes you  
wink,

And goes to your head till you think you  
think!

I like them alive : the printer's ink

Would sensibly tell on the perfume too.

I may use up my nettles, ere I've done;  
But of cowslips — friends get none!

Don't nettles make a broth  
 Wholesome for blood grown lazy and  
 thick?  
 Maws out of sorts make mouths out of  
 taste.  
 My Thirty-four Port — no need to waste  
 On a tongue that's fur and a palate —  
 paste!  
 A magnum for friends who are sound!  
 the sick —  
 I'll posset and cosset them, nothing loth,  
 Henceforward with nettle-broth!  
 1876.

## LA SAISIAZ

## PROLOGUE

Good, to forgive;  
 Best, to forget!  
 Living, we fret;  
 Dying, we live.  
 Fretless and free,  
 Soul, clap thy pinion.  
 Earth have dominion,  
 Body, o'er thee!

Wander at will,  
 Day after day,  
 Wander away,  
 Wandering still —  
 Soul that canst soar!  
 Body may slumber:  
 Body shall cumber  
 Soul-flight no more.

Waft of soul's wing!  
 What lies above?  
 Sunshine and Love  
 Skyblue and Spring!  
 Body hides — where?  
 Ferns of all feather,  
 Mosses and heather,  
 Yours be the care!  
 1878.

## THE TWO POETS OF CROISIC

## PROLOGUE

SUCH a starved bank of moss  
 Till, that May-morn,  
 Blue ran the flash across:  
 Violets were born!  
 Sky — what a scowl of cloud  
 Till, near and far,  
 Ray on ray split the shroud:  
 Splendid, a star!

World — how it walled about  
 Live with disgrace  
 Till God's own smile came out:  
 That was thy face!

## EPILOGUE

What a pretty tale you told me  
 Once upon a time  
 — Said you found it somewhere (scold me!)  
 Was it prose or was it rhyme,  
 Greek or Latin? Greek, you said,  
 While your shoulder propped my head.

Anyhow there's no forgetting  
 This much if no more,  
 That a poet (pray, no petting)  
 Yes, a bard, sir, famed of yore,  
 Went where suchlike used to go,  
 Singing for a prize, you know.

Well, he had to sing, nor merely  
 Sing but play the lyre;  
 Playing was important clearly  
 Quite as singing: I desire.  
 Sir, you keep the fact in mind  
 For a purpose that's behind.

There stood he, while deep attention  
 Held the judges round,  
 — Judges able, I should mention,  
 To detect the slightest sound  
 Sung or played amiss: such ears  
 Had old judges, it appears!

None the less he sang out boldly,  
 Played in time and tune,  
 Till the judges, weighing coldly  
 Each note's worth, seemed, late or soon,  
 Sure to smile "In vain one tries  
 Picking faults out: take the prize!"

When, a mischief! Were they seven  
 Strings the lyre possessed?  
 Oh, and afterwards eleven,  
 Thank you! Well, sir, — who had  
 guessed  
 Such ill luck in store? — it happened  
 One of those same seven strings snapped.

All was lost, then! No! a cricket  
 (What "cicada"? Pooh!)  
 — Some mad thing that left its thicket  
 For mere love of music — flew  
 With its little heart on fire,  
 Lighted on the crippled lyre.



So that when (Ah, joy!) our singer  
 For his truant string  
 Feels with disconcerted finger,  
 What does cricket else but fling  
 Fiery heart forth, sound the note  
 Wanted by the throbbing throat?

Ay and, ever to the ending,  
 Cricket chirps at need,  
 Executes the hand's intending,  
 Promptly, perfectly, — indeed  
 Saves the singer from defeat  
 With her chirrup low and sweet.

Till, at ending, all the judges  
 Cry with one assent  
 "Take the prize — a prize who grudges  
 Such a voice and instrument?  
 Why, we took your lyre for harp,  
 So it shrilled us forth F sharp!"

Did the conqueror spurn the creature,  
 Once its service done?  
 That's no such uncommon feature  
 In the case when Music's son  
 Finds his Lotte's power too spent  
 For aiding soul-development.

No! This other, on returning  
 Homeward, prize in hand,  
 Satisfied his bosom's yearning:  
 (Sir, I hope you understand!)  
 — Said "Some record there must be  
 Of this cricket's help to me!"

So, he made himself a statue:  
 Marble stood, life-size;  
 On the lyre, he pointed at you,  
 Perched his partner in the prize;  
 Never more apart you found  
 Her, he throned, from him, she crowned.

That's the tale: its application?  
 Somebody I know  
 Hopes one day for reputation  
 Through his poetry that's — Oh,  
 All so learned and so wise  
 And deserving of a prize!

If he gains one, will some ticket,  
 When his statue's built,  
 Tell the gazer "Twas a cricket  
 Helped my crippled lyre, whose lilt  
 Sweet and low, when strength usurped  
 Softness' place i' the scale, she chirped?

"For as victory was nighest,  
 While I sang and played, —  
 With my lyre at lowest, highest,  
 Right alike, — one string that made  
 'Love' sound soft was snapt in twain  
 Never to be heard again, —

"Had not a kind cricket fluttered,  
 Perched upon the place  
 Vacant left, and duly uttered  
 'Love, Love, Love,' whene'er the bass  
 Asked the treble to atone  
 For its somewhat sombre drone."

But you don't know music! Wherefore  
 Keep on casting pearls  
 To a — poet? All I care for  
 Is — to tell him that a girl's  
 "Love" comes aptly in when gruff  
 Grows his singing. (There, enough!)  
 1878.

### TRAY

SING me a hero! Quench my thirst  
 Of soul, ye bards!

Quoth Bard the first:  
 "Sir Olaf, the good knight, did don  
 His helm and eke his habergeon" . . .  
 Sir Olaf and his bard!

"That sin-scathed brow" (quoth Bard  
 the second),  
 "That eye wide ope as though Fate  
 beckoned  
 My hero to some steep, beneath  
 Which precipice smiled tempting  
 death" . . .  
 You too without your host have reck-  
 oned;

"A beggar child" (let 's hear this third!)  
 "Sat on a quay's edge: like a bird  
 Sang to herself at careless play,  
 And fell into the stream. 'Dismay!  
 Help, you the standers-by!' None stirred.

"Bystanders reason, think of wives  
 And children ere they risk their lives.  
 Over the balustrade has bounced  
 A mere instinctive dog, and pounced  
 Plumb on the prize. 'How well he dives!

"Up he comes with the child, see, tight  
 In mouth, alive too, clutched from quite

A depth of ten feet — twelve, I bet!  
 Good dog! What, off again? There's  
 yet  
 Another child to save? All right!

"How strange we saw no other fall!  
 It's instinct in the animal.  
 Good dog! But he's a long while under:  
 If he got drowned I should not wonder —  
 Strong current, that against the wall!

"Here he comes, holds in mouth this  
 time  
 — What may the thing be? Well, that's  
 prime!  
 Now, did you ever? Reason reigns  
 In man alone, since all Tray's pains  
 Have fished — the child's doll from the  
 slime!

"And so, amid the laughter gay,  
 Trotted my hero off, — old Tray, —  
 Till somebody, prerogative  
 With reason, reasoned: 'Why he dived,  
 His brain would show us, I should say.

"John, go and catch — or, if needs be,  
 Purchase that animal for me!  
 By vivisection, at expense  
 Of half-an-hour and eighteenpence,  
 How brain secretes dog's soul, we'll see!"  
 1879.

### ECHELOS

HERE is a story, shall stir you! Stand  
 up, Greeks dead and gone,  
 Who breasted, beat Barbarians, stemmed  
 Persia rolling on,  
 Did the deed and saved the world, for  
 the day was Marathon!

No man but did his manliest, kept rank  
 and fought away  
 In his tribe and file: up, back, out, down  
 — was the spear-arm play:  
 Like a wind-whipt branchy wood, all  
 spear-arms a-swing that day!

But one man kept no rank, and his sole  
 arm plied no spear,  
 As a flashing came and went, and a form  
 i' the van, the rear,  
 Brightened the battle up, for he blazed  
 now there, how here.

Nor helmed nor shielded, he! but, a  
 goat-skin all his wear,  
 Like a tiller of the soil, with a clown's  
 limbs broad and bare,  
 Went he ploughing on and on: he pushed  
 with a ploughman's share.

Did the weak mid-line give way, as tun-  
 nies on whom the shark  
 Precipitates his bulk? Did the right-  
 wing halt when, stark  
 On his heap of slain lay stretched Kalli-  
 machos Polemarch?

Did the steady phalanx falter? To the  
 rescue, at the need,  
 The clown was ploughing Persia, clearing  
 Greek earth of weed,  
 As he routed through the Sakian and  
 rooted up the Mede.

But the deed done, battle won, — no-  
 where to be descried  
 On the meadow, by the stream, at the  
 marsh, — look far and wide  
 From the foot of the mountain, no, to  
 the last blood-plashed sea-side, —

Not anywhere on view blazed the large  
 limbs thonged and brown,  
 Shearing and clearing still with the share  
 before which — down  
 To the dust went Persia's pomp, as he  
 ploughed for Greece, that clown!

How spake the Oracle? "Care for no  
 name at all!  
 Say but just this: 'We praise one helpful  
 whom we call  
 The Holder of the Ploughshare.' The  
 great deed ne'er grows small."

Not the great name! Sing — woe for the  
 great name Miltiades  
 And its end at Paros isle! Woe for  
 Themistokles  
 — Satrap in Sardis court! Name not the  
 clown like these! 1880.

### EPILOGUE TO DRAMATIC IDYLS

"TOUCH him ne'er so lightly, into song  
 he broke:  
 Soil so quick-receptive, — not one  
 feather-seed,

Not one flower-dust fell but straight its  
fall awoke

Vitalizing virtue: song would song suc-  
ceed

Sudden as spontaneous — prove a poet-  
soul!"

Indeed?

Rock's the song-soil rather, surface hard  
and bare:

Sun and dew their mildness, storm and  
frost their rage

Vainly both expend, — few flowers  
awaken there:

Quiet in its cleft broods — what the after-  
age

Knows and names a pine, a nation's  
heritage.<sup>1</sup> 1880.

### WANTING IS — WHAT?

WANTING is — what?

Summer redundant,

Blueness abundant,

— Where is the blot?

Beamy the world, yet a blank all the  
same,

— Framework which waits for a picture  
to frame:

What of the leafage, what of the flower?

Roses embowering with naught they  
embower!

Come then, complete incompleteness, O  
corner,

Pant through the blueness, perfect the  
summer!

Breathe but one breath

Rose-beauty above,

And all that was death

Grows life, grows love,

Grows love! 1883.

### ADAM, LILITH, AND EVE

ONE day, it thundered and lightened.

Two women, fairly frightened,

Sank to their knees, transformed, trans-  
fixed,

At the feet of the man who sat betwixt;

<sup>1</sup> Having been criticized for speaking thus of his own work (as well he might, if he chose), Browning wrote the following lines in an album, for an American girl, at Venice:

Thus I wrote in London, musing on my betters,  
Poets dead and gone; and lo, the critics cried,  
"Out on such a boast!" as if I dreamed that fet-  
ters

Binding Dante bind up — me! as if true pride  
Were not also humble! . . .

And "Mercy!" cried each — "if I tell  
the truth

Of a passage in my youth!"

Said This: "Do you mind the morning

I met your love with scorning?

As the worst of the venom left my lips,

I thought, 'If, despite this lie, he strips

The mask from my soul with a kiss — I  
crawl

His slave, — soul, body, and all!"

Said That: "We stood to be married;

The priest, or some one, tarried;

'If Paradise-door prove locked?' smiled  
you.

I thought, as I nodded, smiling too,

'Did one, that's away, arrive — nor late

Nor soon should unlock Hell's gate!"

It ceased to lighten and thunder.

Up started both in wonder,

Looked round and saw that the sky was  
clear,

Then laughed "Confess you believed us,  
Dear!"

"I saw through the joke!" the man  
replied.

They re-seated themselves beside.

1883.

### NEVER THE TIME AND THE PLACE

NEVER the time and the place

And the loved one all together!

This path — how soft to pace!

This May — what magic weather!

Where is the loved one's face?

In a dream that loved one's face meets  
mine,

But the house is narrow, the place is  
bleak

Where, outside, rain and wind combine

With a furtive ear, if I strive to speak,

With a hostile eye at my flushing cheek,

With a malice that marks each word,  
each sign!

O enemy sly and serpentine,

Uncoil thee from the waking man!

Do I hold the Past

Thus firm and fast

Yet doubt if the Future hold I can?

This path so soft to pace shall lead

Through the magic of May to herself  
indeed!

Or narrow if needs the house must be,  
Outside are the storms and strangers:  
we —  
Oh, close, safe, warm, sleep I and she,  
— I and she. 1883.

### SONGS FROM FERISHTAH'S FANCIES

ROUND us the wild creatures, overhead  
the trees,  
Underfoot the moss-tracks, — life and  
love with these!  
I to wear a fawn-skin, thou to dress in  
flowers:

All the long lone summer-day, that  
greenwood life of ours!  
Rich-pavilioned, rather, — still the world  
without, —  
Inside — gold-roofed silk-walled silence  
round about!  
Queen it thou on purple, — I, at watch  
and ward,  
Couched beneath the columns, gaze, thy  
slave, love's guard!

So, for us no world? Let throngs press  
thee to me!  
Up and down amid men, heart by heart  
fare we!  
Welcome squalid vesture, harsh voice,  
hateful face!  
God is soul, souls I and thou: with souls  
should souls have place.

WISH no word unspoken, want no look  
away!  
What if words were but mistake, and  
looks — too sudden, say!  
Be unjust for once, Love! Bear it — well  
I may!

Do me justice always? Bid my heart —  
their shrine —  
Render back its store of gifts, old looks  
and words of thine  
— Oh, so all unjust — the less deserved,  
the more divine?

FIRE is in the flint: true, once a spark  
escapes.  
Fire forgets the kinship, soars till fancy  
shapes  
Some befitting cradle where the babe had  
birth —

Wholly heaven's the product, unallied  
to earth.

Splendors recognized as perfect in the  
star!

In our flint their home was, housed as  
now they are.

VERSE-MAKING was least of my virtues:  
I viewed with despair

Wealth that never yet was but might be  
— all that verse-making were

If the life would but lengthen to wish, let  
the mind be laid bare.

So I said "To do little is bad, to do nothing  
is worse" — And made verse.

Love-making, — how simple a matter!  
No depths to explore,

No heights in a life to ascend! No dis-  
heartening Before,

No affrighting Hereafter, — love now will  
be love evermore.

So I felt "To keep silence were folly"  
— all language above, I made love.

ASK not one least word of praise!

Words declare your eyes are bright?

What then meant that summer day's  
Silence spent in one long gaze?

Was my silence wrong or right?

Words of praise were all to seek!

Face of you and form of you,

Did they find the praise so weak

When my lips just touched your cheek —

Touch which let my soul come through?

"WHY from the world," Ferishtah smiled,  
"should thanks

Go to this work of mine? If worthy  
praise,

Praised let it be and welcome: as verse  
ranks,

So rate my verse: if good therein out-  
weighs

Aught faulty judged, judge justly!

Justice says:

Be just to fact, or blaming or approving:  
But — generous? No, nor loving!

"Loving! what claim to love has work  
of mine?

Concede my life were emptied of its  
gains

To furnish forth and fill work's strict  
confine,

Who works so for the world's sake —  
 he complains  
 With cause when hate, not love,  
 rewards his pains.  
 I looked beyond the world for truth and  
 beauty:  
 Sought, found, and did my duty."  
 1884.

### WHY I AM A LIBERAL

"WHY?" Because all I haply can and do,  
 All that I am now, all I hope to be, —  
 Whence comes it save from fortune set-  
 ting free  
 Body and soul the purpose to pursue,  
 God traced for both? If fetters not a few,  
 Of prejudice, convention, fall from me,  
 These shall I bid men — each in his  
 degree  
 Also God-guided — bear, and gayly, too?  
 But little do or can the best of us:  
 That little is achieved through Liberty.  
 Who, then, dares hold, emancipated thus,  
 His fellow shall continue bound? Not I,  
 Who live, love, labor freely, nor discuss  
 A brother's right to freedom. That is  
 "Why."  
 1885.

### ROSNY

WOE, he went galloping into the war,  
 Clara, Clara!  
 Let us two dream: shall he 'scape with a  
 scar?  
 Scarcely disfigurement, rather a grace  
 Making for manhood which nowise we  
 mar:  
 See, while I kiss it, the flush on his  
 face —  
 Rosny, Rosny!  
 Light does he laugh: "With your love  
 in my soul"  
 (Clara, Clara!)  
 "How could I other than — sound, safe,  
 and whole —  
 Cleave who opposed me asunder, yet  
 stand  
 Scatheless beside you, as, touching love's  
 goal,  
 Who won the race kneels, craves reward  
 at your hand —  
 Rosny, Rosny?"  
 Ay, but if certain who envied should see!  
 Clara, Clara,

Certain who simper: "The hero for me  
 Hardly of life were so chary as miss  
 Death — death and fame — that's love's  
 guerdon when She  
 Boasts, proud bereaved one, her choice  
 fell on this  
 Rosny, Rosny!"

So, — go on dreaming, — he lies mid a heap  
 (Clara, Clara,)   
 Of the slain by his hand: what is death  
 but a sleep?  
 Dead, with my portrait displayed on  
 his breast:  
 Love wrought his undoing: "No pru-  
 dence could keep  
 The love-maddened wretch from his  
 fate." That is best,  
 Rosny, Rosny!

1889.

### POETICS

"So say the foolish!" Say the foolish  
 so, Love?  
 "Flower she is, my rose" — or else,  
 "My very swan is she" —  
 Or perhaps, "Yon maid-moon, blessing  
 earth below, Love,  
 That art thou!" — to them, belike: no  
 such vain words from me.

"Hush, rose, blush! no balm like breath,"  
 I chide it:  
 "Bend thy neck its best, swan, — hers  
 the whiter curve!"  
 Be the moon the moon: my Love I place  
 beside it:  
 What is she? Her human self, — no  
 lower word will serve. 1889.

### SUMMUM BONUM

ALL the breath and the bloom of the  
 year in the bag of one bee:  
 All the wonder and wealth of the mine  
 in the heart of one gem:  
 In the core of one pearl all the shade and  
 the shine of the sea:  
 Breath and bloom, shade and shine, —  
 wonder, wealth, and — how far  
 above them —  
 Truth, that's brighter than gem,  
 Trust, that's purer than pearl —  
 Brightest truth, purest trust in the  
 universe — all were for me  
 In the kiss of one girl. 1889.



## A PEARL, A GIRL

A SIMPLE ring with a single stone,  
 To the vulgar eye no stone of price:  
 Whisper the right word, that alone —  
 Forth starts a sprite, like fire from ice,  
 And lo, you are lord (says an Eastern  
 scroll)  
 Of heaven and earth, lord whole and sole  
 Through the power in a pearl.  
 A woman ('tis I this time that say)  
 With little the world counts worthy  
 praise;  
 Utter the true word — out and away  
 Escapes her soul: I am wrapt in blaze,  
 Creation's lord, of heaven and earth  
 Lord whole and sole — by a minute's  
 birth —  
 Through the love in a girl! 1889.

## MUCKLE-MOUTH MEG

FROWNED the Laird on the Lord: "So,  
 redhanded I catch thee?  
 Death-doomed by our Law of the  
 Border!  
 We've gallows outside and a chiel to dis-  
 patch thee:  
 Who trespasses — hangs: all's in  
 order."  
 He met frown with smile, did the young  
 English gallant:  
 Then the Laird's dame: "Nay, Hus-  
 band, I beg!  
 He's comely: be merciful! Grace for  
 the callant  
 — If he marries our Muckle-mouth  
 Meg!"

"No mile-wide-mouthed monster of  
 yours do I marry:  
 Grant rather the gallows!" laughed he.  
 "Foul fare kith and kin of you — why do  
 you tarry?"  
 "To tame your fierce temper!" quoth  
 she.

"Shove him quick in the Hole, shut him  
 fast for a week:  
 Cold, darkness, and hunger work  
 wonders:  
 Who lion-like roars now, mouse-fashion  
 will squeak,  
 And 'it rains' soon succeed to 'it thun-  
 ders.'"

A week did he bide in the cold and the  
 dark

— Not hunger: for duly at morning  
 In flitted a lass, and a voice like a lark  
 Chirped, "Muckle-mouth Meg still  
 ye're scorning?"

"Go hang, but here's parritch to hearten  
 ye first!"

"Did Meg's Muckle-mouth boast  
 within some  
 Such music as yours, mine should match  
 it or burst:

No frog-jaws! So tell folk, my Win-  
 some!"

Soon week came to end, and, from Hole's  
 door set wide,  
 Out he marched, and there waited the  
 lassie:

"Yon gallows, or Muckle-mouth Meg  
 for a bride!

Consider! Sky's blue and turf's  
 grassy:

Life's sweet: shall I say ye wed  
 Muckle-mouth Meg?"

"Not I," quoth the stout heart: "too  
 eerie

The mouth that can swallow a bubbly-  
 jock's egg;  
 Shall I let it munch mine? Never,  
 Dearie!"

"Not Muckle-mouth Meg? Wow, the  
 obstinate man!

Perhaps he would rather wed me!"

"Ay, would he — with just for a dowry  
 your can!"

"I'm Muckle-mouth Meg," chirruped  
 she.

"Then so — so — so — so" as he kissed  
 her apace —

"Will I widen thee out till thou turnest  
 From Margaret Minnikin-mou', by God's  
 grace,

To Muckle-mouth Meg in good  
 earnest!" 1889.

## DEVELOPMENT

My Father was a scholar and knew Greek.  
 When I was five years old, I asked him  
 once

"What do you read about?"

"The siege of Troy."

"What is a siege, and what is Troy?"

Whereat  
He piled up chairs and tables for a town,  
Set me a-top for Priam, called our cat  
— Helen, enticed away from home (he  
said)

By wicked Paris, who couched some-  
where close

Under the footstool, being cowardly,  
But whom — since she was worth the  
pains, poor puss —

Towzer and Tray, — our dogs, the Atrei-  
dai, — sought

By taking Troy to get possession of  
— Always when great Achilles ceased to  
sulk,

(My pony in the stable) — forth would  
prance

And put to flight Hector — our page-  
boy's self.

This taught me who was who and what  
was what :

So far I rightly understood the case  
At five years old ; a huge delight it proved  
And still proves — thanks to that in-  
structor sage

My Father, who knew better than turn  
straight

Learning's full flare on weak-eyed igno-  
rance,

Or, worse yet, leave weak eyes to grow  
sand-blind,

Content with darkness and vacuity.

It happened, two or three years afterward,  
That — I and playmates playing at  
Troy's Siege —

My Father came upon our make-believe.  
"How would you like to read yourself the  
tale

Properly told, of which I gave you first  
Merely such notion as a boy could bear?  
Pope, now, would give you the precise  
account

Of what, some day, by dint of scholarship,  
You 'll hear — who knows? — from  
Homer's very mouth.

Learn Greek by all means, read the 'Blind  
Old Man,

Sweetest of Singers' — *tuphlos* which  
means 'blind,'

*Hedistos* which means 'sweetest.' Time  
enough!

Try, anyhow, to master him some day ;  
Until when, take what serves for sub-  
stitute,

Read Pope, by all means !"

So I ran through Pope,  
Enjoyed the tale — what history so true?  
Also attacked my Primer, duly drudged,  
Grew fitter thus for what was promised  
next —

The very thing itself, the actual words,  
When I could turn — say, Buttman to  
account.

Time passed, I ripened somewhat : one  
fine day,

"Quite ready for the Iliad, nothing less?  
There's Heine, where the big books block  
the shelf :

Don't skip a word, thumb well the  
Lexicon !"

I thumbed well and skipped nowise till I  
learned

Who was who, what was what, from  
Homer's tongue,

And there an end of learning. Had you  
asked

The all-accomplished scholar, twelve  
years old,

"Who was it wrote the Iliad?" — what a  
laugh!

"Why, Homer, all the world knows : of  
his life

Doubtless some facts exist : it's every-  
where :

We have not settled, though, his place of  
birth :

He begged, for certain, and was blind  
beside :

Seven cities claimed him — Scio, with  
best right,

Thinks Byron. What he wrote? Those  
Hymns we have.

Then there's the 'Battle of the Frogs  
and Mice,'

That's all — unless they dig 'Margites' up  
(I'd like that) nothing more remains to  
know."

Thus did youth spend a comfortable  
time ;

Until — "What's this the Germans say in  
fact

That Wolf found out first? It's un-  
pleasant work

Their chop and change, unsettling one's  
belief :

All the same, where we live, we learn,  
that's sure."

So, I bent brow o'er *Prolegomena*.  
 And after Wolf, a dozen of his like  
 Proved there was never any Troy at all,  
 Neither Besiegers nor Besieged, — nay,  
     worse, —

No actual Homer, no authentic text,  
 No warrant for the fiction I, as fact,  
 Had treasured in my heart and soul so  
     long —

Ay, mark you! and as fact held still, still  
     hold,

Spite of new knowledge, in my heart of  
     hearts

And soul of souls, fact's essence freed and  
     fixed

From accidental fancy's guardian sheath.  
 Assuredly thenceforward — thank my  
     stars, —

However it got there, deprive who  
     could —

Wring from the shrine my precious ten-  
     antry,

Helen, Ulysses, Hector and his Spouse,  
 Achilles and his Friend? — though Wolf  
     — ah, Wolf!

Why must he needs come doubting, spoil  
     a dream?

But then, "No dream's worth waking" —  
     Browning says:

And here's the reason why I tell thus  
     much.

I, now mature man, you anticipate,  
 May blame my Father justifiably  
 For letting me dream out my nonage thus,  
 And only by such slow and sure degrees  
 Permitting me to sift the grain from chaff,  
 Get truth and falsehood known and  
     named as such.

Why did he ever let me dream at all,  
 Not bid me taste the story in its strength?  
 Suppose my childhood was scarce quali-  
     fied

To rightly understand mythology,  
 Silence at least was in his power to keep:  
 I might have — somehow — correspond-  
     ingly —

Well, who knows by what method,  
     gained my gains,  
 Been taught, by forthrights not meander-  
     ings,

My aim should be to loathe, like Peleus'  
     son,

A lie as Hell's Gate, love my wedded wife,  
 Like Hector, and so on with all the rest.  
 Could not I have excogitated this

Without believing such men really were?  
 That is — he might have put into my  
     hand

The "Ethics"? In translation, if you  
     please,

Exact, no pretty lying that improves  
 To suit the modern taste: no more, no  
     less —

The "Ethics": 'tis a treatise I find hard  
 To read aright now that my hair is gray,  
 And I can manage the original.

At five years old — how ill had fared its  
     leaves!

Now, growing double o'er the Stagirite,  
 At least I soil no page with bread and  
     milk,

Nor crumple, dogsear and deface —  
     boys' way. 1889.

#### EPILOGUE TO ASOLANDO

At the midnight in the silence of the  
     sleep-time,

When you set your fancies free,  
 Will they pass to where — by death, fools  
     think, imprisoned —

Low he lies who once so loved you, whom  
     you loved so,  
     — Pity me?

Oh to love so, be so loved, yet so mis-  
     taken!

What had I on earth to do  
 With the slothful, with the mawkish,  
     the unmanly?

Like the aimless, helpless, hopeless, did I  
     drivel

— Being — who?

One who never turned his back but  
     marched breast forward,

Never doubted clouds would break,  
 Never dreamed, though right were  
     worsted, wrong would triumph,  
 Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight  
     better,

Sleep to wake.

No, at noonday in the bustle of man's  
     work-time

Greet the unseen with a cheer!  
 Bid him forward, breast and back as  
     either should be,

"Strive and thrive!" cry "Speed, —  
     fight on, fare ever  
     There as here!" 1889.

# FITZGERALD

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# FITZGERALD

## RUBÁIYÁT

OF

OMAR KHAYYÁM OF NAISHÁPÚR

I

WAKE! For the Sun, who scatter'd into  
flight  
The Stars before him from the Field of  
Night,  
Drives Night along with them from  
Heav'n, and strikes  
The Sultán's Turret with a Shaft of Light.

II

Before the phantom of False morning  
died,  
Methought a Voice within the Tavern  
cried,  
"When all the Temple is prepared  
within,  
Why nods the drowsy Worshipper out-  
side?"

III

And, as the Cock crew, those who stood  
before  
The Tavern shouted — "Open then the  
Door!  
You know how little while we have to  
stay,  
And, once departed, may return no more."

IV

Now the New Year reviving old Desires,  
The thoughtful Soul to Solitude retires,  
Where the WHITE HAND OF MOSES on  
the Bough  
Puts out, and Jesus from the Ground  
suspIRES.

V

Iram indeed is gone with all his Rose,  
And Jamshýd's Sev'n-ring'd Cup where  
no one knows;  
But still a Ruby kindles in the Vine,  
And many a Garden by the Water  
blows.

VI

And David's lips are lockt; but in  
divine  
High-piping Pehleví, with "Wine! Wine!  
Wine!  
Red wine!" — the Nightingale cries to  
the Rose  
That sallow cheek of hers to incarnadine.

VII

Come, fill the Cup, and in the fire of  
Spring  
Your Winter-garment of Repentance  
fling:  
The Bird of Time has but a little way  
To flutter — and the Bird is on the  
Wing

VIII

Whether at Naishápúr or Babylon,  
Whether the Cup with sweet or bitter  
run,  
The Wine of Life keeps oozing drop by  
drop,  
The Leaves of Life keep falling one by  
one.



## IX

Each Morn a thousand Roses brings, you  
say;  
Yes, but where leaves the Rose of Yester-  
day?  
And this first Summer month that  
brings the Rose  
Shall take Jamshýd and Kaikobád away.

## X

Well, let it take them! What have we to  
do  
With Kaikobád the Great, or Kaikhosrú?  
Let Zail and Rustum bluster as they  
will,  
Or Hátim call to Supper — heed not you.

## XI

With me along the strip of Herbage  
strown  
That just divides the desert from the  
sown,  
Where name of Slave and Sultán is for-  
got —  
And Peace to Mahmúd on his golden  
Throne?

## XII

A Book of Verses underneath the Bough,  
A jug of Wine, a Loaf of Bread — and  
Thou  
Beside me singing in the Wilderness —  
Oh, Wilderness were Paradise enow!

## XIII

Some for the Glories of This World; and  
some  
Sigh for the Prophet's Paradise to  
come;  
Ah, take the Cash, and let the Credit go,  
Nor heed the rumble of a distant Drum!

## XIV

Look to the blowing Rose about us —  
"Lo,  
Laughing," she says, "into the world I  
blow.  
At once the silken tassel of my Purse  
Tear, and its Treasure on the Garden  
throw."

## XV

And those who husbanded the Golden  
grain,  
And those who flung it to the winds like  
Rain,  
Alike to no such aureate Earth are  
turn'd  
As, buried once, Men want dug up again.

## XVI

The Worldly Hope men set their Hearts  
upon  
Turns Ashes — or it prospers; and anon,  
Like Snow upon the Desert's dusty  
Face,  
Lighting a little hour or two — is gone.

## XVII

Think, in this batter'd Caravanseraï  
Whose Portals are alternate Night and  
Day,  
How Sultán after Sultán with his Pomp  
Abode his destined Hour, and went his  
way.

## XVIII

They say the Lion and the Lizard keep  
The Courts where Jamshýd gloried and  
drank deep:  
And Bahrám, that great Hunter — the  
Wild Ass  
Stamps o'er his Head, but cannot break  
his Sleep.

## XIX

I sometimes think that never blows so  
red  
The Rose as where some buried Cæsar  
bled;  
That every Hyacinth the Garden wears  
Dropt in her Lap from some once lovely  
Head.

## XX

And this reviving Herb whose tender  
Green  
Fledges the River-Lip on which we lean —  
Ah, lean upon it lightly! for who knows  
From what once lovely Lip it springs un-  
seen!

## XXI

Ah, my Belovéd, fill the Cup that clears  
 To-DAY of past Regrets and Future Fears :  
*To-morrow!* — Why, To-morrow I may  
 be  
 Myself with Yesterday's Sev'n thousand  
 Years.

## XXII

For some we loved, the loveliest and the  
 best  
 That from his Vintage rolling Time hath  
 prest,  
 Have drunk their Cup a Round or two  
 before,  
 And one by one crept silently to rest.

## XXIII

And we, that now make merry in the  
 Room  
 They left, and Summer dresses in new  
 bloom,  
 Ourselves must we beneath the Couch  
 of Earth  
 Descend — ourselves to make a Couch —  
 for whom?

## XXIV

Ah, make the most of what we yet may  
 spend,  
 Before we too into the Dust descend ;  
 Dust into Dust, and under Dust to lie  
 Sans Wine, sans Song, sans Singer, and —  
 sans End !

## XXV

Alike for those who for To-DAY prepare,  
 And those that after some To-MORROW  
 stare,  
 A Muezzín from the Tower of Darkness  
 cries,  
 "Fools! your Reward is neither Here nor  
 There."

## XXVI

Why, all the Saints and Sages who dis-  
 cuss'd  
 Of the Two Worlds so wisely — they are  
 thrust  
 Like foolish Prophets forth; their  
 Words to Scorn  
 Are scatter'd, and their Mouths are stopt  
 with Dust.

## XXVII

Myself when young did eagerly frequent  
 Doctor and Saint, and heard great argu-  
 ment  
 About it and about : but evermore  
 Came out by the same door where in I  
 went.

## XXVIII

With them the seed of Wisdom did I  
 sow,  
 And with mine own hand wrought to  
 make it grow ;  
 And this was all the Harvest that I  
 reap'd —  
 "I came like Water, and like Wind I go."

## XXIX

Into this Universe, and *Why* not knowing  
 Nor *Whence*, like Water willy-nilly flow-  
 ing ;  
 And out of it, as Wind along the  
 Waste,  
 I know not *Whither*, willy-nilly blowing.

## XXX

What, without asking, hither hurried  
*Whence?*  
 And, without asking, *Whither* hurried  
 hence !  
 Oh, many a Cup of this forbidden Wine  
 Must drown the memory of that in-  
 solence !

## XXXI

Up from Earth's Centre through the  
 Seventh Gate  
 I rose, and on the Throne of Saturn  
 sate ;  
 And many a Knot unravel'd by the  
 Road ;  
 But not the Master-knot of Human Fate.

## XXXII

There was the Door to which I found no  
 Key :  
 There was the Veil through which I  
 might not see :  
 Some little talk awhile of ME and  
 THEE  
 There was — and then no more of THEE  
 and ME.

## XXXIII

Earth could not answer; nor the Seas  
that mourn  
In flowing Purple, of their Lord forlorn;  
Nor rolling Heaven, with all his Signs  
reveal'd  
And hidden by the sleeve of Night and  
Morn.

## XXXIV

Then of the THEE IN ME who works  
behind  
The Veil, I lifted up my hands to find  
A Lamp amid the Darkness; and I  
heard,  
As from Without — "THE ME WITHIN  
THEE BLIND!"

## XXXV

Then to the lip of this poor earthen Urn  
I lean'd, the Secret of my Life to learn:  
And Lip to Lip it murmur'd — "While  
you live,  
Drink! — for, once dead, you never shall  
return."

## XXXVI

I think the Vessel, that with fugitive  
Articulation answer'd, once did live,  
And drink; and Ah! the passive Lip I  
kiss'd,  
How many Kisses might it take — and  
give!

## XXXVII

For I remember stopping by the way  
To watch a Potter thumping his wet Clay:  
And with its all-obliterated Tongue  
It murmur'd — "Gently, Brother, gently,  
pray!"

## XXXVIII

And has not such a Story from of Old  
Down Man's successive generations roll'd  
Of such a clod of saturated Earth  
Cast by the Maker into Human mould?

## XXXIX

And not a drop that from our Cups we  
throw  
For Earth to drink of, but may steal  
below  
To quench the fire of Anguish in some  
Eye  
There hidden — far beneath, and long ago.

## XLI

As then the Tulip for her morning sup  
Of Heav'nly Vintage from the soil looks  
up,  
Do you devoutly do the like, till Heav'n  
To Earth invert you — like an empty  
Cup.

## XLII

Perplexed no more with Human or Divine,  
To-morrow's tangle to the winds resign,  
And lose your fingers in the tresses of  
The Cypress-slender Minister of Wine.

## XLIII

And if the Wine you drink, the Lip you  
press,  
End in what All begins and ends in —  
Yes;  
Think then you are TO-DAY what  
YESTERDAY  
You were — TO-MORROW you shall not be  
less.

## XLIII

So when that Angel of the darker Drink  
At last shall find you by the river-brink,  
And, offering his Cup, invite your Soul  
Forth to your Lips to quaff — you shall  
not shrink.

## XLIV

Why, if the Soul can fling the Dust  
aside,  
And naked on the Air of Heaven ride,  
Were't not a Shame — were't not a  
Shame for him  
In this clay carcase crippled to abide?

## XLV

'Tis but a Tent where takes his one day's  
rest  
A Sultán to the realm of Death address;  
The Sultán rises, and the dark Ferrásh  
Strikes, and prepares it for another Guest.

## XLVI

And fear not lest Existence closing your  
Account, and mine, should know the like  
no more;  
The Eternal Sáki from that Bowl has  
pour'd  
Millions of Bubbles like us, and will  
pour.

## XLVII

When You and I behind the Veil are  
past,  
Oh, but the long, long while the World  
shall last,  
Which of our Coming and Departure  
heeds  
As the Sea's self should heed a pebble-  
cast.

## XLVIII

A Moment's Halt — a momentary taste  
Of BEING from the Well amid the Waste—  
And Lo! — the phantom Caravan has  
reach'd  
The NOTHING it set out from — Oh, make  
haste!

## XLIX

Would you that spangle of Existence  
spend  
About THE SECRET — quick about it,  
Friend!  
A Hair perhaps divides the False and  
True —  
And upon what, prithee, may life depend?

## L

A Hair perhaps divides the False and  
True;  
Yes; and a single Alif were the clue —  
Could you but find it—to the Treasure-  
house,  
And peradventure to THE MASTER too;

## LI

Whose secret Presence, through Crea-  
tion's veins  
Running Quicksilver-like eludes your  
pains;  
Taking all shapes from Máh to Máhi;  
and  
They change and perish all—but He  
remains;

## LII

A moment guess'd — then back behind  
the Fold  
Immerst of Darkness round the Drama  
roll'd  
Which, for the Pastime of Eternity,  
He doth Himself contrive, enact, behold.

## LIII

But if in vain, down on the stubborn  
floor  
Of Earth, and up to Heav'n's unopening  
Door,  
You gaze TO-DAY while You are You —  
how then  
TO-MORROW, You when shall be You no  
more?

## LIV

Waste not your Hour, nor in the vain  
pursuit  
Of This and That endeavor and dispute;  
Better be jocund with the fruitful  
Grape  
Than sadden after none, or bitter, Fruit.

## LV

You know, my Friends, with what a brave  
Carouse  
I made a Second Marriage in my house;  
Divorced old barren Reason from my  
Bed,  
And took the Daughter of the Vine to  
Spouse.

## LVI

For "Is" and "IS-NOT" though with Rule  
and Line  
And "UP-AND-DOWN" by Logic I define,  
Of all that one should care to fathom, I  
Was never deep in anything but — Wine.

## LVII

Ah, but my Computations, People say,  
Reduced the Year to better reckoning? —  
Nay,  
'Twas only striking from the Calendar  
Unborn To-morrow, and dead Yester-  
day.

## LVIII

And lately, by the Tavern Door agape,  
Came shining through the Dusk an  
Angel Shape  
Bearing a Vessel on his Shoulder; and  
He bid me taste of it; and 'twas — the  
Grape!

## LIX

The Grape that can with Logic absolute  
The Two-and-Seventy jarring Sects confute :

The sovereign Alchemist that in a trice  
Life's leaden metal into Gold transmute :

## LX

The mighty Mahmúd, Allah-breathing Lord,  
That all the misbelieving and black Horde

Of Fears and Sorrows that infest the Soul  
Scatters before him with his whirlwind Sword.

## LXI

Why, be this Juice the growth of God,  
who dare

Blaspheme the twisted tendril as a Snare?  
A Blessing, we should use it, should we not?

And if a Curse — why, then, Who set it there?

## LXII

I must abjure the Balm of Life, I must,  
Scared by some After-reckoning ta'en on trust,

Or lured with Hope of some Diviner Drink,  
To fill the Cup — when crumbled into Dust!

## LXIII

Oh threats of Hell and Hopes of Paradise!  
One thing at least is certain — *This* Life flies;

One thing is certain and the rest is Lies;  
The Flower that once has blown for ever dies.

## LXIV

Strange, is it not? that of the myriads who  
Before us pass'd the door of Darkness through,

Not one returns to tell us of the Road,  
Which to discover we must travel too,

## LXV

The Revelations of Devout and Learn'd  
Who rose before us, and as Prophets burn'd,  
Are all but Stories, which, awoke from Sleep

They told their comrades, and to Sleep return'd.

## LXVI

I sent my Soul through the Invisible,  
Some letter of that After-life to spell:  
And by and by my Soul return'd to me,  
And answered "I Myself am Heav'n and Hell:"

## LXVII

Heav'n but the Vision of fulfill'd Desire,  
And Hell the Shadow from a Soul on fire,  
Cast on the Darkness into which Our-

selves,  
So late emerged from, shall so soon expire.

## LXVIII

We are no other than a moving row  
Of Magic Shadow-shapes that come and go  
Round with the Sun-illuminated Lantern held

In Midnight by the Master of the Show;

## LXIX

But helpless Pieces of the Game He plays  
Upon his Chequer-board of Nights and Days;

Hither and thither moves, and checks, and slays,  
And one by one back in the Closet lays.

## LXX

The Ball no question makes of Ayes and Noes,  
But Here or There as strikes the Player goes;

And He that toss'd you down into the Field,  
*He* knows about it all — *HE* knows — *HE* knows!

## LXXI

The Moving Finger writes; and, having writ,

Moves on: nor all your Piety nor Wit  
Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,  
Nor all your Tears wash out a Word of it.



## LXXII

And that inverted Bowl they call the Sky,  
Whereunder crawling coop'd we live and  
die,  
Lift not your hands to *It* for help — for  
It  
As impotently moves as you or I.

## LXXIII

With Earth's first Clay They did the Last  
Man knead,  
And there of the Last Harvest sow'd the  
Seed:  
And the first Morning of Creation  
wrote  
What the Last Dawn of Reckoning shall  
read.

## LXXIV

YESTERDAY *This* Day's Madness did pre-  
pare;  
TO-MORROW'S Silence, Triumph, or  
Despair:  
Drink! for you know not whence you  
came, nor why:  
Drink! for you know not why you go, nor  
where.

## LXXV

I tell you this — When, started from the  
Goal,  
Over the flaming shoulders of the Foal  
Of Heav'n Parwin and Mushtari they  
flung,  
In my predestined Plot of Dust and Soul

## LXXVI

The Vine had struck a fibre: which about  
If clings my being — let the Dervish  
flout;  
Of my Base metal may be filed a Key,  
That shall unlock the Door he howls with-  
out.

## LXXVII

And this I know: whether the one True  
Light  
Kindle to Love, or Wrath-consume me  
quite,  
One Flash of It within the Tavern  
caught  
Better than in the Temple lost outright.

## LXXVIII

What! out of senseless Nothing to pro-  
voke  
A conscious Something to resent the  
yoke  
Of unpermitted Pleasure, under pain  
Of Everlasting Penalties, if broke!

## LXXIX

What! from his helpless Creature be re-  
paid  
Pure Gold for what he lent him dross-  
allay'd  
Sue for a Debt he never did contract,  
And cannot answer — Oh the sorry trade!

## LXXX

Oh Thou, who didst with pitfall and with  
gin  
Beset the Road I was to wander in,  
Thou wilt not with Predestined Evil  
round  
Enmesh, and then impute my Fall to Sin!

## LXXXI

Oh, Thou, who Man of baser Earth didst  
make,  
And ev'n with Paradise devise the  
Snake:  
For all the Sin wherewith the Face of  
Man  
Is blacken'd — Man's forgiveness give —  
and take!

\* \* \* \*

## LXXXII

As under cover of departing Day  
Slunk hunger-stricken Ramazán away,  
Once more within the Potter's house  
alone  
I stood, surrounded by the Shapes of  
Clay.

## LXXXIII

Shapes of all Sorts and Sizes, great and  
small,  
That stood along the floor and by the  
wall;  
And some loquacious Vessels were; and  
some  
Listen'd perhaps, but never talk'd at all.

## LXXXIV

Said one among them — "Surely not in  
vain  
My substance of the common Earth was  
ta'en  
And to this Figure moulded, to be  
broke,  
Or trampled back to shapeless Earth  
again."

## LXXXV

Then said a Second — "Ne'er a peevish  
Boy  
Would break the Bowl from which he  
drank in joy;  
And He that with his hand the Vessel  
made  
Will surely not in after Wrath destroy."

## LXXXVI

After a momentary silence spake  
Some Vessel of a more ungainly Make;  
"They sneer at me for leaning all  
awry:  
What! did the Hand then of the Potter  
shake?"

## LXXXVII

Whereat some one of the loquacious  
Lot —  
I think a Súfi pipkin — waxing hot —  
"All this of Pot and Potter — Tell me  
then,  
Who is the Potter, pray, and who the  
Pot?"

## LXXXVIII

"Why," said another, "Some there are  
who tell  
Of one who threatens he will toss to Hell  
The luckless Pots he marr'd in making  
— Pish!  
He's a Good Fellow, and 'twill all be  
well."

## LXXXIX

"Well," murmur'd one, "Let whoso make  
or buy,  
My Clay with long Oblivion is gone dry:  
But fill me with the old familiar Juice,  
Methinks I might recover by and by."

## XC

So while the Vessels one by one were  
speaking,  
The little Moon look'd in that all were  
seeking:  
And then they jogg'd each other,  
"Brother! Brother!  
Now for the Porter's shoulder-knot  
a-creaking!"

\* \* \* \*

## XCI

Ah, with the Grape my fading Life pro-  
vide,  
And wash the Body whence the Life has  
died,  
And lay me, shrouded in the living  
Leaf,  
By some not unfrequented Garden-side.

## XCII

That ev'n my buried Ashes such a snare  
Of Vintage shall fling up into the Air  
As not a True-believer passing by  
But shall be overtaken unaware.

## XCIII

Indeed the Idols I have loved so long  
Have done my credit in this World much  
wrong:  
Have drown'd my Glory in a shallow  
Cup  
And sold my Reputation for a Song.

## XCIV

Indeed, indeed, Repentance oft before  
I swore — but was I sober when I  
swore?  
And then and then came Spring, and  
Rose-in-hand  
My thread-bare Penitence apieces tore.

## XCV

And much as Wine has play'd the  
Infidel,  
And robb'd me of my Robe of Honor —  
Well,  
I wonder often what the Vintners buy  
One half so precious as the stuff they  
sell.

## XCVI

Yet Ah, that Spring should vanish with  
the Rose!

That Youth's sweet-scented manuscript  
should close!

The Nightingale that in the branches  
sang,

Ah whence, and whither flown again, who  
knows!

## XCVII

Would but the Desert of the Fountain  
yield

One glimpse — if dimly, yet indeed,  
reveal'd,

To which the fainting Traveller might  
spring,

As springs the trampled herbage of the  
field!

## XCVIII

Would but some wingèd Angel ere too  
late

Arrest the yet unfolded Roll of Fate,  
And make the stern Recorder otherwise

Enregister, or quite obliterate!

## XCIX

Ah Love! could you and I with Him  
conspire

To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things  
entire,

Would not we shatter it to bits — and  
then

Re-mould it nearer to the Heart's Desire!

\* \* \* \*

## C

Yon rising Moon that looks for us again—  
How oft hereafter will she wax and wane;

How oft hereafter rising look for us  
Through this same Garden — and for *one*  
in vain!

## CI

And when like her, oh Sákí, you shall pass  
Among the Guests Star-scatter'd on the  
Grass,

And in your joyous errand reach the  
spot

Where I made One — turn down an  
empty Glass!

TAMÁM

# CLOUGH

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\*ARNOLD, The Scholar Gipsy; *Thyrsis*. — \*LOWELL, Agassiz, section III.

# CLOUGH

## IN A LECTURE-ROOM

AWAY, haunt thou not me,  
Thou vain Philosophy!  
Little hast thou bestead,  
Save to perplex the head,  
And leave the spirit dead.  
Unto thy broken cisterns wherefore go,  
While from the secret treasure-depths  
below,  
Fed by the skiey shower,  
And clouds that sink and rest on hill-  
tops high,  
Wisdom at once, and Power,  
Are welling, bubbling forth, unseen,  
incessantly?  
Why labor at the dull mechanic oar,  
When the fresh breeze is blowing,  
And the strong current flowing,  
Right onward to the Eternal Shore?  
1840. 1849.

## BLANK MISGIVINGS

How often sit I, poring o'er  
My strange distorted youth,  
Seeking in vain, in all my store,  
One feeling based on truth;  
Amid the maze of petty life,  
A clue whereby to move,  
A spot whereon in toil and strife  
To dare to rest and love.  
So constant as my heart would be,  
So fickle as it must,  
'Twere well for others as for me  
'Twere dry as summer dust.  
Excitements come, and act and speech  
Flow freely forth; — but no,  
Nor they, nor aught beside can reach  
The buried world below.  
1841. 1849.

τὸ καλόν

I HAVE seen higher, holier things than  
these,  
And therefore must to these refuse my  
heart,

Yet am I panting for a little ease;  
I'll take, and so depart.

Ah, hold! the heart is prone to fall away,  
Her high and cherished visions to for-  
get,  
And if thou takest, how wilt thou repay  
So vast, so dread a debt?

How will the heart, which now thou  
trustest, then  
Corrupt, yet in corruption mindful yet,  
Turn with sharp stings upon itself! Again,  
Bethink thee of the debt!

— Hast thou seen higher, holier things  
than these,  
And therefore must to these thy heart  
refuse?  
With the true best, alack, how ill agrees  
That best that thou would'st choose!

The Summum Pulchrum rests in heaven  
above;  
Do thou, as best thou may'st, thy duty  
do:  
Amid the things allowed thee live and  
love;  
Some day thou shalt it view.  
1841. 1849.

## QUA CURSUM VENTUS

As ships, becalmed at eve, that lay  
With canvas drooping, side by side,  
Two towers of sail at dawn of day  
Are scarce long leagues apart descried;  
When fell the night, upsprung the breeze,  
And all the darkling hours they plied,  
Nor dreamt but each the self-same seas  
By each was cleaving, side by side;

E'en so, but why the tale reveal  
Of those, whom year by year un-  
changed,  
Brief absence joined anew to feel,  
Astounded, soul from soul estranged?



At dead of night their sails were filled,  
 And onward each rejoicing steered —  
 Ah, neither blame, for neither willed,  
 Or wist, what first with dawn appeared !

To veer, how vain ! On, onward strain,  
 Brave barks ! In light, in darkness too,  
 Through winds and tides one compass  
 guides —  
 To that, and your own selves, be true.

But O blithe breeze ; and O great seas,  
 Though ne'er, that earliest parting  
 past,  
 On your wide plain they join again,  
 Together lead them home at last.

One port, methought, alike they sought,  
 One purpose hold where'er they fare, —  
 O bounding breeze, O rushing seas !  
 At last, at last, unite them there !

1849.

### THE NEW SINAI

Lo, here is God, and there is God !  
 Believe it not, O Man ;  
 In such vain sort to this and that  
 The ancient heathen ran :  
 Though old Religion shake her head,  
 And say in bitter grief,  
 The day behold, at first foretold,  
 Of atheist unbelief :  
 Take better part, with manly heart,  
 Thine adult spirit can ;  
 Receive it not, believe it not,  
 Believe it not, O Man !

As men at dead of night awaked  
 With cries, "The king is here,"  
 Rush forth and greet whome'er they  
 meet,  
 Whoe'er shall first appear ;  
 And still repeat, to all the street,  
 "'Tis he, — the king is here ;"  
 The long procession moveth on,  
 Each nobler form they see,  
 With changeful suit they still salute  
 And cry, "'Tis he, 'tis he !"

So, even so, when men were young,  
 And earth and heaven were new,  
 And His immediate presence He  
 From human hearts withdrew,  
 The Soul perplexed and daily vexed  
 With sensuous False and True,

Amazed, bereaved, no less believed,  
 And fain would see Him too :  
 "He is !" the prophet-tongues pro-  
 claimed ;

In joy and hasty fear,  
 "He is !" aloud replied the crowd,  
 "Is here, and here, and here."

"He is ! They are !" in distance seen  
 On yon Olympus high,  
 In those Avernian woods abide  
 And walk this azure aký :  
 "They are ! They are !" — to every  
 show

Its eyes the baby turned,  
 And blazes sacrificial, tall,  
 On thousand altars burned :  
 "They are ! They are !" — On Sinai's  
 top

Far seen the lightnings shone,  
 The thunder broke, a trumpet spoke,  
 And God said, "I am One."

God spake it out, "I, God, am One ;"  
 The unheeding ages ran.  
 And baby-thoughts again, again,  
 Have dogged the growing man :  
 And as of old from Sinai's top  
 God said that God is One,  
 By Science strict so speaks He now  
 To tell us, There is None !  
 Earth goes by chemic forces ; Heaven's  
 A Mécanique Céleste !  
 And heart and mind of human kind  
 A watch-work as the rest !

Is this a Voice, as was the Voice,  
 Whose speaking told abroad,  
 When thunder pealed, and mountain  
 reeled,

The ancient truth of God ?  
 Ah, not the Voice ; 'tis but the cloud,  
 The outer-darkness dense,  
 Where image none, nor e'er was seen  
 Similitude of sense.  
 'Tis but the cloudy darkness dense  
 That wrapt the Mount around ;  
 While in amaze the people stays,  
 To hear the Coming Sound.

Is there no prophet-soul the while  
 To dare, sublimely meek,  
 Within the shroud of blackest cloud  
 The Deity to seek ?  
 'Midst atheistic systems dark,  
 And darker hearts' despair,

That soul has heard perchance His word,  
 And on the dusky air  
 His skirts, as passed He by, to see  
 Hath strained on their behalf,  
 Who on the plain, with dance amain,  
 Adore the Golden Calf.

'Tis but the cloudy darkness dense;  
 Though blank the tale it tells,  
 No God, no Truth! yet He, in sooth,  
 Is there — within it dwells;  
 Within the sceptic darkness deep  
 He dwells that none may see,  
 Till idol forms and idle thoughts  
 Have passed and ceased to be:  
 No God, no Truth! ah though, in sooth  
 So stands the doctrine's half:  
 On Egypt's track return not back,  
 Nor own the Golden Calf.

Take better part, with manlier heart,  
 Thine adult spirit can;  
 No God, no Truth, receive it ne'er —  
 Believe it ne'er — O Man!  
 But turn not then to seek again  
 What first the ill began;  
 No God, it saith; ah, wait in faith  
 God's self-completing plan;  
 Receive it not, but leave it not,  
 And wait it out, O Man!

"The Man that went the cloud within  
 Is gone and vanished quite;  
 He cometh not," the people cries,  
 "Nor bringeth God to sight:  
 Lo these thy gods, that safety give,  
 Adore and keep the feast!"  
 Deluding and deluded cries  
 The Prophet's brother-Priest:  
 And Israel all bows down to fall  
 Before the gilded beast.

Devout, indeed! that priestly creed,  
 O Man, reject as sin;  
 The clouded hill attend thou still,  
 And him that went within.  
 He yet shall bring some worthy thing  
 For waiting souls to see:  
 Some sacred word that he hath heard  
 Their light and life shall be;  
 Some lofty part, than which the heart  
 Adopt no nobler can,  
 Thou shalt receive, thou shalt believe  
 And thou shalt do, O Man!

1845. 1869.

## THE QUESTIONING SPIRIT

THE human spirits saw I on a day,  
 Sitting and looking each a different way;  
 And hardly tasking, subtly questioning,  
 Another spirit went around the ring  
 To each and each: and as he ceased his  
 say,  
 Each after each, I heard them singly sing,  
 Some querulously high, some softly,  
 sadly low,  
 We know not — what avails to know?  
 We know not — wherefore need we  
 know?  
 This answer gave they still unto his suing,  
 We know not, let us do as we are doing.  
 Dost thou not know that these things only  
 seem? —  
 I know not, let me dream my dream.  
 Are dust and ashes fit to make a  
 treasure? —

I know not, let me take my pleasure.  
 What shall avail the knowledge thou hast  
 sought? —  
 I know not, let me think my thought.  
 What is the end of strife? —  
 I know not, let me live my life.  
 How many days or e'er thou mean'st to  
 move? —  
 I know not, let me love my love.  
 Were not things old once new? —  
 I know not, let me do as others do.  
 And when the rest were overpast,  
 I know not, I will do my duty, said the  
 last.

Thy duty do? rejoined the voice,  
 Ah, do it, do it, and rejoice;  
 But shalt thou then, when all is done,  
 Enjoy a love, embrace a beauty  
 Like these, that may be seen and won  
 In life, whose course will then be run;  
 Or wilt thou be where there is none?  
 I know not, I will do my duty.

And taking up the word around, above,  
 below,  
 Some querulously high, some softly,  
 sadly low,  
 We know not, sang they all, nor ever need  
 we know.  
 We know not, sang they, what avails to  
 know?  
 Whereat the questioning spirit, some  
 short space,

Though unabashed, stood quiet in his place.

But as the echoing chorus died away  
And to their dreams the rest returned  
apace,

By the one spirit I saw him kneeling low,  
And in a silvery whisper heard him say :  
Truly, thou know'st not, and thou need'st  
not know ;

Hope only, hope thou, and believe al-  
way ;

I also know not, and I need not know,  
Only with questionings pass I to and fro,  
Perplexing these that sleep, and in their  
folly

Imbreeding doubt and sceptic melan-  
choly ;

Till that, their dreams deserting, they  
with me

Come all to this true ignorance and thee.  
1847. 1862.

### BETHESDA

#### A SEQUEL

I SAW again the spirits on a day,  
Where on the earth in mournful case they  
lay ;

Five porches were there, and a pool, and  
round,

Huddling in blankets, strewn upon the  
ground,

Tied-up and bandaged, weary, sore and  
spent,

The maimed and halt, diseased and im-  
potent.

For a great angel came, 'twas said, and  
stirred

The pool at certain seasons, and the word  
Was, with this people of the sick, that  
they

Who in the waters here their limbs should  
lay

Before the motion on the surface ceased  
Should of their torment straightway be  
released.

So with shrunk bodies and with hands  
down-dropped,

Stretched on the steps, and at the pil-  
lars propped,

Watching by day and listening through  
the night,

They filled the place, a miserable sight.

And I beheld that on the stony floor  
He too, that spoke of duty once before,  
No otherwise than others here to-day,  
Foredone and sick and sadly muttering  
lay.

"I know not, I will do — what is it I  
would say :

What was that word which once sufficed  
alone for all,

Which now I seek in vain, and never can  
recall?"

And then, as weary of in vain renewing  
His question, thus his mournful thought  
pursuing,

"I know not, I must do as other men are  
doing."

But what the waters of that pool might  
be,

Of Lethe were they, or Philosophy ;  
And whether he, long waiting, did attain  
Deliverance from the burden of his pain  
There with the rest ; or whether, yet  
before,

Some more diviner stranger passed the  
door

With his small company into that sad  
place,

And breathing hope into the sick man's  
face,

Bade him take up his bed, and rise and  
go,

What the end were, and whether it were  
so,

Further than this I saw not, neither  
know. 1849. 1862.

### FROM AMOURS DE VOYAGE<sup>1</sup>

#### EN ROUTE

*Over the great windy waters, and over the  
dear-crested summits,*

*Unto the sun and the sky, and unto the  
perfecter earth,*

<sup>1</sup> Clough's long poem in hexameters, *The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich*, interesting as it is, is of too little importance and poetic value in proportion to its length, to be included in these selections ; and no parts of it are detachable as extracts. Some examples of Clough's use of hexameters (and elegiacs) may however be taken from his other long poem, the *Amours de Voyage*, which suffer comparatively little in being separated from their context, and are equally characteristic of some of Clough's moods. They are also interesting as a contrast to Byron's verses on Rome, in *Childe Harold* and elsewhere. On the *Amours de Voyage*, see especially Bagehot's essay on Clough.

*Come, let us go, — to a land wherein gods of  
the old time wandered,  
Where every breath even now changes to  
ether divine.  
Come let us go; though withal a voice  
whisper, "The world that we live in,  
Whithersoever we turn, still is the same  
narrow crib;  
'Tis but to prove limitation, and measure a  
cord, that we travel;  
Let who would 'scape and be free go to his  
chamber and think;  
'Tis but to change the idle fancies for  
memories wilfully falser;  
'Tis but to go and have been." — Come,  
little bark! let us go.*

## ROME

ROME disappoints me still; but I shrink  
and adapt myself to it.  
Somehow a tyrannous sense of a super-  
incumbent oppression  
Still, wherever I go, accompanies ever,  
and makes me  
Feel like a tree (shall I say?) buried under  
a ruin of brickwork.  
Rome, believe me, my friend, is like its  
own Monte Testaceo,  
Merely a marvelous mass of broken and  
castaway wine-pots.  
Ye gods! what do I want with this rub-  
bish of ages departed,  
Things that Nature abhors, the experi-  
ments that she has failed in?  
What do I find in the Forum? An arch-  
way and two or three pillars.  
Well, but St. Peter's? Alas, Bernini has  
filled it with sculpture!  
No one can cavil, I grant, at the size of the  
great Coliseum.  
Doubtless the notion of grand and capa-  
cious and massive amusement,  
This the old Romans had; but tell me, is  
this an idea?  
Yet of solidity much, but of splendor  
little is extant:  
"Brickwork I found thee, and marble I  
left thee!" their Emperor vaunted;  
"Marble I thought thee, and brickwork I  
find thee!" the Tourist may  
answer.

## THE PANTHEON

No, great Dome of Agrippa, thou art not  
Christian! canst not,

Strip and replaster and daub and do what  
they will with thee, be so!  
Here underneath the great porch of  
colossal Corinthian columns,  
Here as I walk, so I dream of the Chris-  
tian belfries above them?  
Or, on a bench as I sit and abide for long  
hours, till thy whole vast  
Round grows dim as in dreams to my  
eyes, I repeople thy niches,  
Not with the Martyrs, and Saints, and  
Confessors, and Virgins, and chil-  
dren,  
But with the mightier forms of an older,  
austerer worship;  
And I recite to myself, how

Eager for battle here  
Stood Vulcan, here maternal Juno,  
And with the bow to his shoulder faith-  
ful

He, who with pure dew laveth of Castaly  
His flowing locks, who holdeth of Lycia  
The oak forest and the wood that bore  
him,  
Delos' and Patara's own Apollo.

## ON MONTORIO'S HEIGHT

TIBUR is beautiful, too, and the orchard  
slopes, and the Anio  
Falling, falling yet, to the ancient lyrical  
cadence;  
Tibur and Anio's tide; and cool from  
Lucretilis ever,  
With the Digentian stream, and with the  
Bandusian fountain,  
Folded in Sabine recesses, the valley and  
villa of Horace: —  
So not seeing I sang; so seeing and lis-  
tening say I,  
Here as I sit by the stream, as I gaze at  
the cell of the Sibyl,  
Here with Albunea's home and the grove  
of Tiberinus beside me;  
Tivoli beautiful is, and musical, O Tev-  
erone,  
Dashing from mountain to plain, thy  
parted impetuous waters,  
Tivoli's waters and rocks; and fair unto  
Monte Gennaro  
(Haunt, even yet, I must think, as I  
wander and gaze, of the shadows.  
Faded and pale, yet immortal, of Faunus,  
the Nymphs, and the Graces),  
Fair in itself, and yet fairer with human  
completing creations,

Folded in Sabine recesses the valley and  
 villa of Horace : —  
 So not seeing I sang ; so now — Nor seeing,  
 nor hearing,  
 Neither by waterfall lulled, nor folded in  
 sylvan embraces,  
 Neither by cell of the Sibyl, nor stepping  
 the Monte Gennaro,  
 Seated on Anio's bank, nor sipping  
 Bandusian waters,  
 But on Montorio's height, looking down  
 on the tile-clad streets, the  
 Cupolas, crosses, and domes, the bushes  
 and kitchen-gardens,  
 Which, by the grace of the Tibur, pro-  
 claim themselves Rome of the  
 Romans, —  
 But on Montorio's height, looking forth  
 to the vapory mountains,  
 Cheating the prisoner Hope with illu-  
 sions of vision and fancy, —  
 But on Montorio's height, with these  
 weary soldiers by me,  
 Waiting till Oudinot enter, to reinstate  
 Pope and Tourist.

#### THE REAL QUESTION

*Action will furnish belief*, — but will that  
 belief be the true one?  
 This is the point, you know. However,  
 it doesn't much matter.  
 What one wants, I suppose, is to prede-  
 termine the action,  
 So as to make it entail, not a chance be-  
 lief, but the true one.  
*Out of the question*, you say ; *if a thing*  
*isn't wrong we may do it.*  
 Ah ! but this *wrong*, you see — but I do  
 not know that it matters. . . .

#### SCEPTIC MOODS

ROME is fallen, I hear, the gallant Med-  
 ici taken,  
 Noble Manara slain, and Garibaldi has  
 lost *il Moro* ;  
 Rome is fallen ; and fallen, or falling,  
 heroic Venice.  
 I, meanwhile, for the loss of a single  
 small chit of a girl, sit  
 Moping and mourning here, — for her,  
 and myself much smaller.  
 Whither depart the souls of the brave  
 that die in the battle,  
 Die in the lost, lost fight, for the cause  
 that perishes with them?

Are they upborne from the field on the  
 slumberous pinions of angels  
 Unto a far-off home, where the weary rest  
 from their labor  
 And the deep wounds are healed, and  
 the bitter and burning moisture  
 Wiped from the generous eyes ? or do they  
 linger, unhappy,  
 Pining, and haunting the grave of their  
 by-gone hope and endeavor ?  
 All declamation, alas ! though I talk,  
 I care not for Rome nor  
 Italy ; feebly and faintly, and but with  
 the lips, can lament the  
 Wreck of the Lombard youth, and the  
 victory of the oppressor.  
 Whither depart the brave ! — God  
 knows ; I certainly do not.

#### ENVOI

*So go forth to the world, to the good report  
 and the evil !  
 Go, little book ! thy tale, is it not evil and  
 good ?  
 Go, and if strangers revile, pass quietly by  
 without answer.  
 Go, and if curious friends ask of thy rear-  
 ing and age,  
 Say, "I am flitting about many years from  
 brain unto brain of  
 Feeble and restless youths born to in-  
 glorious days :  
 But," so finish the word, "I was writ in a  
 Roman chamber,  
 When from Janiculan heights thundered  
 the cannon of France."*  
 1848-1849. 1858.

#### PESCHIERA

WHAT voice did on my spirit fall,  
 Peschiera, when thy bridge I crost ?  
 "'Tis better to have fought and lost,  
 Than never to have fought at all."

The tricolor — a trampled rag —  
 Lies, dirt and dust ; the lines I track  
 By sentry boxes yellow-black,  
 Lead up to no Italian flag.

I see the Croat soldier stand  
 Upon the grass of your redoubts ;  
 The eagle with his black wings flouts  
 The breadth and beauty of your land.



Yet not in vain, although in vain,  
O men of Brescia, on the day  
Of loss past hope, I heard you say  
Your welcome to the noble pain.

You say, "Since so it is, — good-bye  
Sweet life, high hope; but whatsoe'er  
May be, or must, no tongue shall dare  
To tell, 'The Lombard feared to die!'"

You said (there shall be answer fit),  
"And if our children must obey,  
They must: but thinking on this day  
'Twill less debase them to submit."

You said (Oh not in vain you said),  
"Haste, brothers, haste, while yet we  
may;  
The hours ebb fast of this one day  
When blood may yet be nobly shed."

Ah! not for idle hatred, not  
For honor, fame, nor self-applause,  
But for glory of the cause,  
You did, what will not be forgot.

And though the stranger stand, 'tis true,  
By force and fortune's right he stands;  
By fortune, which is in God's hands,  
And strength, which yet shall spring in  
you.

This voice did on my spirit fall,  
Peschiera, when thy bridge I crost,  
" 'Tis better to have fought and lost,  
Than never to have fought at all."  
1849. 1862.

#### ALTERAM PARTEM

OR shall I say, Vain word, false thought,  
Since Prudence hath her martyrs too,  
And Wisdom dictates not to do,  
Till doing shall be not for nought?

Not ours to give or lose is life;  
Will Nature, when her brave ones fall,  
Remake her work? or songs recall  
Death's victim slain in useless strife?

That rivers flow into the sea  
Is loss and waste, the foolish say,  
Nor know that back they find their way,  
Unseen, to where they wont to be.

Showers fall upon the hills, springs flow,  
The river runneth still at hand,  
Brave men are born into the land,  
And whence the foolish do not know.

No! no vain voice did on me fall,  
Peschiera, when thy bridge I crost,  
" 'Tis better to have fought and lost,  
Than never to have fought at all."  
1849. 1862.

#### IN THE DEPTHS

It is not sweet content, be sure,  
That moves the nobler Muse to song,  
Yet when could truth come whole and  
pure  
From hearts that inly writhe with  
wrong?

'Tis not the calm and peaceful breast  
That sees or reads the problem true;  
They only know, on whom 't has prest  
Too hard to hope to solve it too.

Our ills are worse than at their ease  
These blameless happy souls suspect,  
They only study the disease,  
Also, who live not to detect. 1862.

#### THE LATEST DECALOGUE

THOU shalt have one God only; who  
Would be at the expense of two?  
No graven images may be  
Worshipped, except the currency:  
Swear not at all; for, for thy curse  
Thine enemy is none the worse:  
At church on Sunday to attend  
Will serve to keep the world thy friend:  
Honor thy parents: that is, all  
From whom advancement may befall;  
Thou shalt not kill; but need'st not strive  
Officiously to keep alive:  
Do not adultery commit;  
Advantage rarely comes of it:  
Thou shalt not steal; an empty feat,  
When it's so lucrative to cheat:  
Bear not false witness; let the lie  
Have time on its own wings to fly:  
Thou shalt not covet, but tradition  
Approves all forms of competition.

1862.

## FROM DIPSYCHUS

"THERE is no God," the wicked saith,  
 "And truly it's a blessing,  
 For what He might have done with us  
 It's better only guessing."

"There is no God," a youngster thinks,  
 "Or really, if there may be,  
 He surely did not mean a man  
 Always to be a baby."

"There is no God, or if there is,"  
 The tradesman thinks, "'twere funny  
 If He should take it ill in me  
 To make a little money."

"Whether there be," the rich man says,  
 "It matters very little,  
 For I and mine, thank somebody,  
 Are not in want of victual."

Some others, also, to themselves,  
 Who scarce so much as doubt it,  
 Think there is none, when they are well  
 And do not think about it.

But country folks who live beneath  
 The shadow of the steeple;  
 The parson and the parson's wife,  
 And mostly married people;

Youths green and happy in first love,  
 So thankful for illusion;  
 And men caught out in what the world  
 Calls guilt, in first confusion;

And almost every one when age,  
 Disease, or sorrows strike him,  
 Inclines to think there is a God,  
 Or something very like Him.  
 1849. 1862.

OUR gaities, our luxuries,  
 Our pleasures and our glee,  
 Mere insolence and wantonness,  
 Alas! they feel to me.

How shall I laugh and sing and dance?  
 My very heart recoils,  
 While here to give my mirth a chance  
 A hungry brother toils.

The joy that does not spring from joy  
 Which I in others see,  
 How can I venture to employ,  
 Or find it joy for me? 1849. 1869.

THIS world is very odd we see,  
 We do not comprehend it;  
 But in one fact we all agree,  
 God won't, and we can't mend it.

Being common sense, it can't be sin  
 To take it as I find it;  
 The pleasure to take pleasure in;  
 The pain, try not to mind it.

These juicy meats, this flashing wine,  
 May be an unreal mere appearance;  
 Only — for my inside, in fine,  
 They have a singular coherence.

Oh yes, my pensive youth, abstain;  
 And any empty sick sensation,  
 Remember, anything like pain  
 Is only your imagination.

Trust me, I've read your German sage  
 To far more purpose e'er than you did;  
 You find it in his wisest page,  
 Whom God deludes is well deluded.  
 1849. 1869.

WHERE are the great, whom thou  
 would'st wish to praise thee?  
 Where are the pure, whom thou would'st  
 choose to love thee?  
 Where are the brave, to stand supreme  
 above thee,  
 Whose high commands would cheer,  
 whose chiding raise thee?  
 Seek, seeker, in thyself; submit to find  
 In the stones, bread, and life in the blank  
 mind. 1849. 1862.

WHEN the enemy is near thee,  
 Call on us!  
 In our hands we will upbear thee,  
 He shall neither scathe nor scare thee,  
 He shall fly thee, and shall fear thee.  
 Call on us!  
 Call when all good friends have left thee,  
 Of all good sights and sounds bereft thee;  
 Call when hope and heart are sinking,  
 And the brain is sick with thinking,  
 Help, O help!  
 Call, and following close behind thee  
 There shall haste, and there shall find  
 thee,  
 Help, sure help.

When the panic comes upon thee,  
 When necessity seems on thee,  
 Hope and choice have all forgone thee,  
 Fate and force are closing o'er thee,  
 And but one way stands before thee —

Call on us!

Oh, and if thou dost not call,  
 Be but faithful, that is all.  
 Go right on, and close behind thee  
 There shall follow still and find thee,  
 Help, sure help.

1849. 1862.

### SAY NOT THE STRUGGLE NOUGHT AVAILETH

SAY not the struggle nought availeth,  
 The labor and the wounds are vain,  
 The enemy faints not, nor faileth,  
 And as things have been they remain.

If hopes were dupes, fears may be liars;  
 It may be, in yon smoke concealed,  
 Your comrades chase e'en now the fliers,  
 And, but for you, possess the field.

For while the tired waves, vainly breaking,  
 Seem here no painful inch to gain,  
 Far back, through creeks and inlets  
 making,  
 Comes silent, flooding in, the main.

And not by eastern windows only,  
 When daylight comes, comes in the  
 light,  
 In front, the sun climbs slow, how slowly,  
 But westward, look, the land is bright.

1849. 1862.

### EASTER DAY

NAPLES, 1849

THROUGH the great sinful streets of  
 Naples as I passed,  
 With fiercer heat than flamed above  
 my head  
 My heart was hot within me; till at last  
 My brain was lightened when my  
 tongue had said —  
 Christ is not risen!

Christ is not risen, no —  
 He lies and moulders low;  
 Christ is not risen!

What though the stone were rolled away,  
 and though

The grave found empty there? —  
 If not there, then elsewhere;  
 If not where Joseph laid Him first, why  
 then

Where other men  
 Translaid Him after, in some humbler  
 clay,

Long ere to-day  
 Corruption that sad perfect work hath  
 done,

Which here she scarcely, lightly had  
 begun:

The foul engendered worm  
 Feeds on the flesh of the life-giving form  
 Of our most Holy and Anointed One.

He is not risen, no —  
 He lies and moulders low;  
 Christ is not risen!

What if the women, ere the dawn was  
 gray,

Saw one or more great angels, as they say  
 (Angels, or Him himself)? Yet neither  
 there, nor then,

Nor afterwards, nor elsewhere, nor at all,  
 Hath He appeared to Peter or the Ten;  
 Nor save in thunderous terror, to blind  
 Saul;

Save in an after Gospel and late Creed,  
 He is not risen, indeed, —  
 Christ is not risen!

Or, what if e'en, as runs a tale, the Ten  
 Saw, heard, and touched, again and yet  
 again?

What if at Emmaüs' inn, and by Caper-  
 naum's Lake,

Came One, the bread that brake —  
 Came One that spake as never mortal  
 spake,

And with them ate, and drank, and stood,  
 and walked about?

Ah? "some" did well to "doubt!"  
 Ah! the true Christ, while these things  
 came to pass,  
 Nor heard, nor spake, nor walked, nor  
 lived, alas!

He was not risen, no —  
 He lay and mouldered low,  
 Christ was not risen!

As circulates in some great city crowd  
 A rumor changeful, vague, importunate,  
 and loud,

From no determined centre or of fact  
 Or authorship exact,  
 Which no man can deny  
 Nor verify;  
 So spread the wondrous fame;  
 He all the same  
 Lay senseless, mouldering, low:  
 He was not risen, no —  
 Christ was not risen!

Ashes to ashes, dust to dust;  
 As of the unjust, also of the just —  
 Yes, of that Just One, too!  
 This is the one sad Gospel that is true —  
 Christ is not risen!

Is He not risen, and shall we not rise?  
 Oh, we unwise!  
 What did we dream, what wake we to  
 discover?  
 Ye hills, fall on us, and ye mountains,  
 cover!  
 In darkness and great gloom  
 Come ere we thought it is *our* day of  
 doom;  
 From the cursed world, which is one tomb,  
 Christ is not risen!

Eat, drink, and play, and think that this  
 is bliss:  
 There is no heaven but this;  
 There is no hell,  
 Save earth, which serves the purpose  
 doubly well,  
 Seeing it visits still  
 With equalest apportionment of ill  
 Both good and bad alike, and brings to  
 one same dust  
 The unjust and the just  
 With Christ, who is not risen.

Eat, drink, and die, for we are souls be-  
 reaved:  
 Of all the creatures under heaven's  
 wide cope  
 We are most hopeless, who had once  
 most hope,  
 And most beliefless, that had most be-  
 lieved.  
 Ashes to ashes, dust to dust;  
 As of the unjust, also of the just —  
 Yea, of that Just One too!  
 It is the one sad Gospel that is true —  
 Christ is not risen!

Weep not beside the tomb,  
 Ye women, unto whom

He was great solace while ye tended Him;  
 Ye who with napkin o'er the head  
 And folds of linen round each wounded  
 limb

Laid out the Sacred Dead;  
 And thou that bar'st Him in thy won-  
 dering womb;  
 Yea, Daughters of Jerusalem, depart,  
 Bind up as best ye may your own sad  
 bleeding heart:

Go to your homes, your living children  
 tend,  
 Your earthly spouses love;  
 Set your affections *not* on things  
 above,

Which moth and rust corrupt, which  
 quickest come to end:  
 Or pray, if pray ye must, and pray, if  
 pray ye can,  
 For death; since dead is He whom ye  
 deemed more than man,  
 Who is not risen: no —  
 But lies and moulders low —  
 Who is not risen!

Ye men of Galilee!  
 Why stand ye looking up to heaven,  
 where Him ye ne'er may see,  
 Neither ascending hence, nor returning  
 hither again?  
 Ye ignorant and idle fishermen!  
 Hence to your huts, and boats, and in-  
 land native shore,  
 And catch not men, but fish;  
 Whate'er things ye might wish,  
 Him neither here nor there ye e'er shall  
 meet with more.  
 Ye poor deluded youths, go home,  
 Mend the old nets ye left to roam,  
 Tie the split oar, patch the torn sail:  
 It was indeed an "idle tale" —  
 He was not risen!

And, oh, good men of ages yet to be,  
 Who shall believe *because* ye did not see —  
 Oh, be ye warned, be wise!  
 Nor more with pleading eyes,  
 And sobs of strong desire,  
 Unto the empty vacant void aspire,  
 Seeking another and impossible birth  
 That is not of your own, and only mother  
 earth.

But if there is no other life for you,  
 Sit down and be content, since this must  
 even do;  
 He is not risen!

One look, and then depart,  
 Ye humble and ye holy men of heart;  
 And ye! ye ministers and stewards of a  
 Word  
 Which ye would preach, because another  
 heard —  
 Ye worshippers of that ye do not  
 know,  
 Take these things hence and go: —  
 He is not risen!

Here, on our Easter Day  
 We rise, we come, and lo! we find Him  
 not,  
 Gardener nor other, on the sacred spot:  
 Where they have laid Him there is none  
 to say;  
 No sound, nor in, nor out — no word  
 Of where to seek the dead or meet the  
 living Lord.  
 There is no glistening of an angel's wings,  
 There is no voice of heavenly clear be-  
 hest:  
 Let us go hence, and think upon these  
 things  
 In silence, which is best.  
 Is He not risen? No —  
 But lies and moulders low?  
 Christ is not risen?

## EASTER DAY

## II

So in the sinful streets, abstracted and  
 alone,  
 I with my secret self held communing of  
 mine own.  
 So in the southern city spake the tongue  
 Of one that somewhat overwildly sung,  
 But in a later hour I sat and heard  
 Another voice that spake — another  
 graver word.  
 Weep not, it bade, whatever hath been  
 said,  
 Though He be dead, He is not dead.  
 In the true creed  
 He is yet risen indeed;  
 Christ is yet risen.

Weep not beside His Tomb,  
 Ye women unto whom  
 He was great comfort and yet greater  
 grief;  
 Nor ye, ye faithful few that wont with  
 Him to roam,

Seek sadly what for Him ye left, go hope-  
 less to your home;  
 Nor ye despair, ye sharers yet to be of  
 their belief;  
 Though He be dead, He is not dead,  
 Nor gone, though fled,  
 Not lost, though vanished;  
 Though He return not, though  
 He lies and moulders low;  
 In the true creed  
 He is yet risen indeed;  
 Christ is yet risen.

Sit if ye will, sit down upon the ground,  
 Yet not to weep and wail, but calmly look  
 around.  
 Whate'er befell,  
 Earth is not hell;  
 Now, too, as when it first began,  
 Life is yet life, and man is man,  
 For all that breathe beneath the heaven's  
 high cope,  
 Joy with grief mixes, with despondence  
 hope.  
 Hope conquers cowardice, joy grief;  
 Or at least, faith unbelief.  
 Though dead, not dead;  
 Not gone, though fled;  
 Not lost, though vanished.  
 In the great gospel and true creed,  
 He is yet risen indeed;  
 Christ is yet risen. 1849. 1869.

## HOPE EVERMORE AND BELIEVE!

HOPE evermore and believe, O man, for  
 e'en as thy thought  
 So are the things that thou see'st;  
 e'en as thy hope and belief.  
 Cowardly art thou and timid? they rise  
 to provoke thee against them:  
 Hast thou courage? enough, see them  
 exulting to yield.  
 Yea, the rough rock, the dull earth, the  
 wild sea's furiating waters  
 (Violent say'st thou and hard, mighty  
 thou think'st to destroy).  
 All with ineffable longing are waiting  
 their Invader,  
 All, with one varying voice, call to him,  
 Come and subdue;  
 Still for their Conqueror call, and, but  
 for the joy of being conquered  
 (Rapture they will not forego), dare to  
 resist and rebel;



Still, when resisting and raging, in soft  
undervoice say unto him,  
Fear not, retire not, O man; hope  
evermore and believe.

Go from the east to the west, as the sun  
and the stars direct thee,  
Go with the girdle of man, go and  
encompass the earth.

Not for the gain of the gold; for the  
getting, the hoarding, the having,  
But for the joy of the deed; but for the  
Duty to do.

Go with the spiritual life, the higher  
volition and action,  
With the great girdle of God, go and  
encompass the earth.

Go; say not in thy heart, And what then  
were it accomplished,  
Were the wild impulse allayed, what  
were the use or the good!

Go, when the instinct is stilled, and when  
the deed is accomplished,  
What thou hast done and shalt do  
shall be declared to thee then.

Go with the sun and the stars, and yet  
evermore in thy spirit  
Say to thyself: It is good: yet is there  
better than it.

This that I see is not all, and this that I  
do is but little;  
Nevertheless it is good, though there is  
better than it. 1862.

### QUI LABORAT, ORAT

O ONLY Source of all our light and life,  
Whom as our truth, our strength, we  
see and feel,  
But whom the hours of mortal moral  
strife  
Alone aright reveal!

Mine inmost soul, before Thee inly  
brought,  
Thy presence owns ineffable, divine;  
Chastised each rebel self-encentered  
thought,  
My will adareth Thine.

With eye down-dropped, if then this  
earthly mind  
Speechless remain, or speechless e'en  
depart;

Nor seek to see — for what of earthly  
kind  
Can see Thee as Thou art? —

If well-assured 'tis but profanely bold  
In thought's abstractest forms to seem  
to see,

It dare not dare the dread communion  
hold  
In ways unworthy Thee,

O not unowned, thou shalt unnamed  
forgive,  
In worldly walks the prayerless heart  
prepare;

And if in work its life it seem to live,  
Shalt make that work be prayer.

Nor times shall lack, when while the  
work it plies,  
Unsummoned powers the blinding film  
shall part,

And scarce by happy tears made dim, the  
eyes  
In recognition start.

But, as thou wilt, give or e'en forbear  
The beatific supersensual sight,  
So, with Thy blessing blessed, that  
humbler prayer

Approach Thee morn and night.  
1862.

ὑμνος ὑμνος

O THOU whose image in the shrine  
Of human spirits dwells divine;  
Which from that precinct once conveyed,  
To be to outer day displayed,  
Doth vanish, part, and leave behind  
Mere blank and void of empty mind,  
Which wilful fancy seeks in vain  
With casual shapes to fill again!

O Thou that in our bosom's shrine  
Dost dwell, unknown because divine!  
I thought to speak, I thought to say,  
"The light is here," "behold the way,"  
"The voice was thus," and "thus the  
word,"

And "thus I saw," and "that I heard," —  
But from the lips that half essayed  
The imperfect utterance fell unmade.

O Thou, in that mysterious shrine  
Enthroned, as I must say, divine!

I will not frame one thought of what  
Thou mayest either be or not.  
I will not prate of "thus" and "so,"  
And be profane with "yes" and "no,"  
Enough that in our soul and heart  
Thou, whatsoe'er Thou may'st be, art.

Unseen, secure in that high shrine  
Acknowledged present and divine,  
I will not ask some upper air,  
Some future day to place Thee there;  
Nor say, nor yet deny, such men  
And women saw Thee thus and then:  
Thy name was such, and there or here  
To him or her Thou didst appear.

Do only Thou in that dim shrine,  
Unknown or known, remain, divine;  
There, or if not, at least in eyes  
That scan the fact that round them lies  
The hand to sway, the judgment guide  
In sight and sense Thyself divide:  
Be thou but there, — in soul and heart  
I will not ask to feel Thou art. 1862.

#### "THROUGH A GLASS DARKLY"

WHAT we, when face to face we see  
The Father of our souls, shall be,  
John tells us, doth not yet appear;  
Ah! did he tell what we are here!

A mind for thoughts to pass into,  
A heart for loves to travel through,  
Five senses to detect things near,  
Is this the whole that we are here?

Rules baffle instincts — instincts rules,  
Wise men are bad — and good are fools.  
Facts evil — wishes vain appear,  
We cannot go, why are we here?

O may we for assurance' sake,  
Some arbitrary judgment take,  
And wilfully pronounce it clear,  
For this or that 'tis we are here?

Or is it right, and will it do,  
To pace the sad confusion through,  
And say: — It doth not yet appear,  
What we shall be, what we are here?

Ah yet, when all is thought and said,  
The heart still overrules the head;  
Still what we hope we must believe,  
And what is given us receive;

Must still believe, for still we hope  
That in a world of larger scope,  
What here is faithfully begun  
Will be completed, not undone.

My child, we still must think, when we  
That ampler life together see,  
Some true result will yet appear  
Of what we are, together, here. 1862.

#### AH! YET CONSIDER IT AGAIN!

"OLD things need not be therefore true,"  
O brother men, nor yet the new;  
Ah! still awhile the old thought retain,  
And yet consider it again!

The souls of now two thousand years  
Have laid up here their toils and fears,  
And all the earnings of their pain, —  
Ah, yet consider it again!

We! what do we see? each a space  
Of some few yards before his face;  
Does that the whole wide plan explain?  
Ah, yet consider it again!

Alas! the great world goes its way,  
And takes its truth from each new day;  
They do not quit, nor can retain,  
Far less consider it again.

1851. 1862.

#### SONGS IN ABSENCE

COME home, come home! and where is  
home for me,  
Whose ship is driving o'er the trackless  
sea?

To the frail bark here plunging on its way,  
To the wild waters, shall I turn and say  
To the plunging bark, or to the salt sea  
foam,

You are my home?

Fields once I walked in, faces once I  
knew,  
Familiar things so old my heart believed  
them true,

These far, far back, behind me lie, before  
The dark clouds mutter, and the deep  
seas roar,

And speak to them that 'neath and o'er  
them roam

No words of home.

Beyond the clouds, beyond the waves  
 that roar,  
 There may indeed, or may not be a shore,  
 Where fields as green, and hands and  
 hearts as true,  
 The old forgotten semblance may renew,  
 And offer exiles driven far o'er the salt sea  
 foam  
 Another home.

But toil and pain must wear out many a  
 day,  
 And days bear weeks, and weeks bear  
 months away,  
 Ere, if at all, the weary traveller hear,  
 With accents whispered in his wayworn  
 ear,  
 A voice he dares to listen to, say, Come  
 To thy true home.

Come home, come home! and where a  
 home hath he  
 Whose ship is driving o'er the driving  
 sea?  
 Through clouds that mutter, and o'er  
 waves that roar,  
 Say, shall we find, or shall we not, a shore  
 That is, as is not ship or ocean foam,  
 Indeed our home?

1852. 1862.

GREEN fields of England! wheresoe'er  
 Across this watery waste we fare,  
 Your image at our hearts we bear,  
 Green fields of England, everywhere.

Sweet eyes in England, I must flee  
 Past where the waves' last confines be,  
 Ere your loved smile I cease to see,  
 Sweet eyes in England, dear to me.

Dear home in England, safe and fast  
 If but in thee my lot lie cast,  
 The past shall seem a nothing past  
 To thee, dear home, if won at last;  
 Dear home in England, won at last.

1852. 1862.

COME back, come back! behold with  
 straining mast  
 And swelling sail, behold her steaming  
 fast;  
 With one new sun to see her voyage o'er,  
 With morning light to touch her native  
 shore,  
 Come back! come back.

Come back, come back! while westward  
 laboring by,  
 With sailless yards, a bare black hulk we  
 fly.  
 See how the gale we fight with sweeps her  
 back,  
 To our lost home, on our forsaken track.  
 Come back, come back.

Come back, come back! across the flying  
 foam,  
 We hear faint far-off voices call us home:  
 Come back, ye seem to say; ye seek in  
 vain;  
 We went, we sought, and homeward  
 turned again.  
 Come back, come back.

Come back, come back; and whither back  
 or why?  
 To fan quenched hopes, forsaken schemes  
 to try;  
 Walk the old fields; pace the familiar  
 street;  
 Dream with the idlers, with the bards  
 compete.  
 Come back, come back.

Come back, come back; and whither and  
 for what?  
 To finger idly some old Gordian knot,  
 Unskilled to sunder, and too weak to  
 cleave,  
 And with much toil attain to half-believe.  
 Come back, come back.

Come back, come back; yea back, in-  
 deed, do go  
 Sighs panting thick, and tears that want  
 to flow;  
 Fond fluttering hopes upraise their use-  
 less wings,  
 And wishes idly struggle in the strings;  
 Come back, come back.

Come back, come back, more eager than  
 the breeze  
 The flying fancies sweep across the seas,  
 And lighter far than ocean's flying foam,  
 The heart's fond message hurries to its  
 home.  
 Come back, come back.

Come back, come back!  
 Back flies the foam; the hoisted flag  
 streams back;

The long smoke wavers on the home-  
ward track,  
Back fly with winds things which the  
winds obey,  
The strong ship follows its appointed way.  
1852. 1862.

SOME future day when what is now is not,  
When all old faults and follies are forgot,  
And thoughts of difference passed like  
dreams away,  
We'll meet again, upon some future day.

When all that hindered, all that vexed  
our love,  
As tall rank weeds will climb the blade  
above,  
When all but it has yielded to decay,  
We'll meet again upon some future day.

When we have proved, each on his course  
alone,  
The wider world, and learned what's now  
unknown,  
Have made life clear, and worked out  
each a way,  
We'll meet again, — we shall have much  
to say.

With happier mood, and feelings born  
anew,  
Our boyhood's bygone fancies we'll re-  
view,  
Talk o'er old talks, play as we used to play,  
And meet again, on many a future day.

Some day, which oft our hearts shall  
yearn to see,  
In some far year, though distant yet to be,  
Shall we indeed, — ye winds and waters,  
say! —  
Meet yet again, upon some future day?  
1852. 1862.

WHERE lies the land to which the ship  
would go?  
Far, far ahead, is all her seamen know.  
And where the land she travels from?  
Away,  
Far, far behind, is all that they can say.

On sunny noons upon the deck's smooth  
face,  
Linked arm in arm, how pleasant here to  
pace;

Or, o'er the stern reclining, watch below  
The foaming wake far widening as we go.

On stormy nights when wild north-  
westers rave,  
How proud a thing to fight with wind and  
wave!

The dripping sailor on the reeling mast  
Exults to bear, and scorns to wish it past.

Where lies the land to which the ship  
would go?  
Far, far ahead, is all her seamen know.  
And where the land she travels from?  
Away,  
Far, far behind, is all that they can say.  
1852. 1862.

WERE you with me, or I with you,  
That's nought, methinks, I might not do;  
Could venture here, and venture there,  
And never fear, nor ever care.

To things before, and things behind,  
Could turn my thoughts, and turn my  
mind,  
On this and that, day after day,  
Could dare to throw myself away.

Secure, when all was o'er, to find  
My proper thought, my perfect mind,  
And unimpaired receive anew  
My own and better self in you.  
1853. 1862.

O SHIP, ship, ship,  
That travellest over the sea,  
What are the tidings, I pray thee,  
Thou bearest hither to me?

Are they tidings of comfort and joy,  
That shall make me seem to see  
The sweet lips softly moving  
And whispering love to me?

Or are they of trouble and grief,  
Estrangement, sorrow, and doubt,  
To turn into torture my hopes,  
And drive me from Paradise out?

O ship, ship, ship,  
That comest over the sea,  
Whatever it be thou bringest,  
Come quickly with it to me.  
1853. 1869.

## THE STREAM OF LIFE

O STREAM descending to the sea,  
Thy mossy banks between,  
The flow'rets blow, the grasses grow,  
The leafy trees are green.

In garden plots the children play,  
The fields the laborers till,  
And houses stand on either hand,  
And thou descendest still.

O life descending into death,  
Our waking eyes behold,  
Parent and friend thy lapse attend,  
Companions young and old.

Strong purposes our mind possess,  
Our hearts affections fill,  
We toil and earn, we seek and learn,  
And thou descendest still.

O end to which our currents tend,  
Inevitable sea,  
To which we flow, what do we know,  
What shall we guess of thee?

A roar we hear upon thy shore,  
As we our course fulfil;  
Scarce we divine a sun will shine  
And be above us still. 1862.

"WITH WHOM IS NO VARIABLE-  
NESS, NEITHER SHADOW OF  
TURNING"

It fortifies my soul to know  
That, though I perish, Truth is so:  
That, howsoe'er I stray and range,  
Whate'er I do, Thou dost not change.  
I steadier step when I recall  
That, if I slip, Thou dost not fall. 1862.

ITE DOMUM SATURÆ, VENIT  
HESPERUS

THE skies have sunk, and hid the upper  
snow  
(Home, Rose, and home, Provence and  
La Palie),  
The rainy clouds are filing fast below,  
And wet will be the path, and wet shall  
we.  
Home, Rose, and home, Provence and  
La Palie.

Ah dear, and where is he, a year ago,  
Who stepped beside and cheered us on and  
on?

My sweetheart wanders far away from  
me,  
In foreign land or on a foreign sea.  
Home, Rose, and home, Provence and  
La Palie.

The lightning zigzags shoot across the sky  
(Home, Rose, and home, Provence and  
La Palie),  
And through the vale the rains go sweep-  
ing by;  
Ah me, and when in shelter shall we be?  
Home, Rose, and home, Provence and  
La Palie.

Cold, dreary cold, the stormy winds feel  
they  
O'er foreign lands and foreign seas that  
stray  
(Home, Rose, and home, Provence and  
La Palie).  
And doth he e'er, I wonder, bring to  
mind  
The pleasant huts and herds he left be-  
hind?  
And doth he sometimes in his slumbering  
see  
The feeding kine, and doth he think of me,  
My sweetheart wandering whereso'er it  
be?  
Home, Rose, and home, Provence and  
La Palie.

The thunder bellows far from snow to  
snow  
(Home, Rose, and home, Provence and  
La Palie),  
And loud and louder roars the flood be-  
low.  
Heigho! but soon in shelter shall we be:  
Home, Rose, and home, Provence and  
La Palie.

Or shall he find before his term be sped,  
Some comelier maid that he shall wish to  
wed?  
(Home, Rose, and home, Provence and  
La Palie).  
For weary is work, and weary day by day  
To have your comfort miles on miles  
away.  
Home, Rose, and home, Provence and  
La Palie.





Nay, better far to mark off thus much  
 air,  
 And call it Heaven : place bliss and glory  
 there ;  
 Fix perfect homes in the unsubstantial  
 sky,  
 And say, what is not, will be by-and-bye.  
 1869.

# PERCHÈ PENSA? PENSANDO S'IN- VECCHIA

To spend uncounted years of pain,  
 Again, again, and yet again,  
 In working out in heart and brain  
 The problem of our being here ;  
 To gather facts from far and near,  
 Upon the mind to hold them clear,  
 And, knowing more may yet appear,  
 Unto one's latest breath to fear,  
 The premature result to draw —  
 Is this the object, end and law,  
 And purpose of our being here ?  
 1869.

# LIFE IS STRUGGLE

To wear out heart, and nerves, and brain,  
 And give oneself a world of pain ;  
 Be eager, angry, fierce, and hot,  
 Imperious, supple — God knows what,  
 For what's all one to have or not ;  
 O false, unwise, absurd, and vain !  
 For 'tis not joy, it is not gain,  
 It is not in itself a bliss,  
 Only it is precisely this  
 That keeps us all alive.

To say we truly feel the pain,  
 And quite are sinking with the strain ; —  
 Entirely, simply, undeceived,  
 Believe, and say we ne'er believed  
 The object, e'en were it achieved,  
 A thing we e'er had cared to keep ;  
 With heart and soul to hold it cheap,  
 And then to go and try it again ;  
 O false, unwise, absurd, and vain !

O, 'tis not joy, and 'tis not bliss,  
 Only it is precisely this  
 That keeps us still alive. 1869.

# IN A LONDON SQUARE

Put forth thy leaf, thou lofty plane,  
 East wind and frost are safely gone ;  
 With zephyr mild and balmy rain  
 The summer comes serenely on ;  
 Earth, air, and sun and skies combine  
 To promise all that's kind and fair : —  
 But thou, O human heart of mine,  
 Be still, contain thyself, and bear.

December days were brief and chill,  
 The winds of March were wild and  
 drear,  
 And, nearing and receding still,  
 Spring never would, we thought, be  
 here.  
 The leaves that burst, the suns that shine,  
 Had, not the less, their certain date : —  
 And thou, O human heart of mine,  
 Be still, refrain thyself, and wait.  
 1869.

# ALL IS WELL

WHATE'ER you dream, with doubt  
 possessed,  
 Keep, keep it snug within your breast,  
 And lay you down and take your rest ;  
 Forget in sleep the doubt and pain,  
 And when you wake, to work again.  
 The wind it blows, the vessel goes,  
 And where and whither, no one knows.

'Twill all be well : no need of care ;  
 Though how it will, and when, and  
 where,  
 We cannot see, and can't declare.  
 In spite of dreams, in spite of thought,  
 'Tis not in vain, and not for nought,  
 The wind it blows, the ship it goes,  
 Though where and whither, no one  
 knows. 1869.

# ARNOLD

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## ARNOLD

### QUIET WORK

ONE lesson, Nature, let me learn of thee,  
One lesson which in every wind is blown,  
One lesson of two duties kept at one  
Though the loud world proclaim their  
    enmity —

Of toil unsever'd from tranquillity!  
Of labor, that in lasting fruit outgrows  
Far noisier schemes, accomplish'd in  
    repose,

Too great for haste, too high for rivalry!  
Yes, while on earth a thousand discords  
    ring,

Man's fitful uproar mingling with his toil,  
Still do thy sleepless ministers move on,  
Their glorious tasks in silence perfecting;  
Still working, blaming still our vain  
    turmoil,

Laborers that shall not fail, when man is  
    gone. 1849.

### TO A FRIEND

Who prop, thou ask'st, in these bad days,  
    my mind? —

He much, the old man, who, clearest-  
    soul'd of men,

Saw The Wide Prospect, and the Asian  
    Fen,

And Tmolus hill, and Smyrna bay, though  
    blind.

Much he, whose friendship I not long  
    since won,

That halting slave, who in Nicopolis  
Taught Arrian, when Vespasian's brutal  
    son

Clear'd Rome of what most shamed him.  
    But be his

My special thanks, whose even-balanced  
    soul,

From first youth tested up to extreme old  
    age,

Business could not make dull, nor passion  
    wild;

Who saw life steadily, and saw it whole:  
The mellow glory of the Attic stage,  
Singer of sweet Colonus, and its child.  
1849.

### SHAKESPEARE

OTHERS abide our question. Thou art  
    free.

We ask and ask — Thou smilest and art  
    still,

Out-topping knowledge. For the loftiest  
    hill,

Who to the stars uncrowns his majesty,  
Planting his steadfast footsteps in the sea,  
Making the heaven of heavens his dwell-  
    ing-place,

Spares but the cloudy border of his base  
To the foil'd searching of mortality;

And thou, who didst the stars and sun-  
    beams know,

Self-school'd, self-scann'd, self-honor'd,  
    self-secure,

Didst tread on earth unguess'd at, —  
    Better so!

All pains the immortal spirit must endure,  
All weakness which impairs, all griefs  
    which bow,

Find their sole speech in that victorious  
    brow. 1849.

### THE FORSAKEN MERMAN

Come, dear children, let us away;  
Down and away below!

Now my brothers call from the bay,  
Now the great winds shoreward blow,

Now the salt tides seaward flow;  
Now the wild white horses play,

Champ and chafe and toss in the spray  
Children dear, let us away!

This way, this way!

Call her once before you go —

Call once yet!

In a voice that she will know:

"Margaret! Margaret!"



Children's voices should be dear  
 (Call once more) to a mother's ear;  
 Children's voices, wild with pain —  
 Surely she will come again!  
 Call her once and come away;  
 This way, this way!  
 "Mother dear, we cannot stay!  
 The wild white horses foam and fret."  
 Margaret! Margaret!

Come, dear children, come away down;  
 Call no more!  
 One last look at the white-wall'd town,  
 And the little gray church on the windy  
 shore,  
 Then come down!  
 She will not come though you call all day;  
 Come away, come away!

Children dear, was it yesterday  
 We heard the sweet bells over the bay?  
 In the caverns where we lay,  
 Through the surf and through the swell,  
 The far-off sound of a silver bell?  
 Sand-strewn caverns, cool and deep,  
 Where the winds are all asleep;  
 Where the spent lights quiver and gleam,  
 Where the salt weed sways in the stream,  
 Where the sea-beasts, ranged all round,  
 Feed in the ooze of their pasture-ground;  
 Where the sea-snakes coil and twine,  
 Dry their mail and bask in the brine;  
 Where great whales come sailing by,  
 Sail and sail, with unshut eye,  
 Round the world for ever and aye?  
 When did music come this way?  
 Children dear, was it yesterday?

Children dear, was it yesterday  
 (Call yet once) that she went away?  
 Once she sate with you and me,  
 On a red gold throne in the heart of the  
 sea,

And the youngest sate on her knee.  
 She comb'd its bright hair, and she tended  
 it well,

When down swung the sound of a far-off  
 bell.

She sigh'd, she look'd up through the  
 clear green sea;

She said: "I must go, for my kinsfolk  
 pray

In the little gray church on the shore to-  
 day.

'Twill be Easter-time in the world — ah  
 me!

And I lose my poor soul, Merman! here  
 with thee."

I said: "Go up, dear heart, through the  
 waves;

Say thy prayer, and come back to the  
 kind sea-caves!"

She smiled, she went up through the surf  
 in the bay.

Children dear, was it yesterday?

Children dear, were we long alone?

"The sea grows stormy, the little ones  
 moan;

Long prayers," I said, "in the world they  
 say;

Come!" I said; and we rose through the  
 surf in the bay.

We went up the beach, by the sandy  
 down

Where the sea-stocks bloom, to the white-  
 wall'd town;

Through the narrow paved streets, where  
 all was still,

To the little gray church on the windy  
 hill.

From the church came a murmur of folk  
 at their prayers,

But we stood without in the cold blowing  
 airs.

We climb'd on the graves, on the stones  
 worn with rains,

And we gazed up the aisle through the  
 small leaded panes.

She sate by the pillar; we saw her clear:  
 "Margaret, hie! come quick, we are  
 here!

Dear heart," I said, "we are long alone;  
 The sea grows stormy, the little ones  
 moan."

But, ah, she gave me never a look,  
 For her eyes were seal'd to the holy book!

Loud prays the priest; shut stands the  
 door.

Come away, children, call no more!

Come away, come down, call no more!

Down, down, down!

Down to the depths of the sea!

She sits at her wheel in the humming  
 town,

Singing most joyfully.

Hark what she sings: "O joy, O joy,  
 For the humming street, and the child  
 with its toy!

For the priest and the bell, and the holy  
 well;

For the wheel where I spun,  
And the blessed light of the sun!"  
And so she sings her fill,  
Singing most joyfully,  
Till the spindle drops from her hand,  
And the whizzing wheel stands still.  
She steals to the window, and looks at the  
sand,

And over the sand at the sea;  
And her eyes are set in a stare;  
And anon there breaks a sigh,  
And anon there drops a tear,  
From a sorrow-clouded eye,  
And a heart sorrow-laden,  
A long, long sigh;  
For the cold strange eyes of a little Mer-  
maiden  
And the gleam of her golden hair.

Come away, away children;  
Come children, come down!  
The hoarse wind blows coldly;  
Lights shine in the town.  
She will start from her slumber  
When gusts shake the door;  
She will hear the winds howling,  
Will hear the waves roar.  
We shall see, while above us  
The waves roar and whirl,  
A ceiling of amber,  
A pavement of pearl.  
Singing: "Here came a mortal,  
But faithless was she!  
And alone dwell for ever  
The kings of the sea."

But, children, at midnight,  
When soft the winds blow,  
When clear falls the moonlight,  
When spring tides are low;  
When sweet airs come seaward  
From heaths starr'd with broom,  
And high rocks throw mildly  
On the blanch'd sands a gloom;  
Up the still, glistening beaches,  
Up the creeks we will hie,  
Over banks of bright seaweed  
The ebb-tide leaves dry.  
We will gaze, from the sand-hills,  
At the white, sleeping town;  
At the church on the hill-side —  
And then come back down.  
Singing: "There dwells a loved one,  
But cruel is she!  
She left lonely for ever  
The kings of the sea."

1849.

## THE STRAYED REVELLER

THE PORTICO OF CIRCE'S PALACE  
EVENING

*A Youth. Circe**The Youth*

FASTER, faster,  
O Circe, Goddess,  
Let the wild, thronging train,  
The bright procession  
Of eddying forms,  
Sweep through my soul!

Thou standest, smiling  
Down on me! thy right arm,  
Lean'd up against the column there,  
Props thy soft cheek;  
Thy left holds, hanging loosely,  
The deep cup, ivy-cinctured,  
I held but now.

Is it, then, evening  
So soon? I see, the night-dews,  
Cluster'd in thick beads, dim  
The agate brooch-stones  
On thy white shoulder;  
The cool night-wind, too,  
Blows through the portico,  
Stirs thy hair, Goddess,  
Waves thy white robe!

*Circe*

Whence art thou, sleeper?

*The Youth*

When the white dawn first  
Through the rough fir-planks  
Of my hut, by the chestnuts,  
Up at the valley-head,  
Came breaking, Goddess!  
I sprang up, I threw round me  
My dappled fawn-skin;  
Passing out, from the wet turf,  
Where they lay, by the hut door,  
I snatch'd up my vine-crown, my fir-staff,  
All drench'd in dew —  
Came swift down to join  
The rout early gather'd  
In the town, round the temple,  
Iacchus' white fane  
On yonder hill.

Quick I pass'd, following  
 The wood-cutters' cart-track  
 Down the dark valley; — I saw  
 On my left, through the beeches,  
 Thy palace, Goddess,  
 Smokeless, empty!  
 Trembling, I enter'd; beheld  
 The court all silent,  
 The lions sleeping,  
 On the altar this bowl.  
 I drank, Goddess!  
 And sank down here, sleeping,  
 On the steps of thy portico.

*Circe*

Foolish boy! Why tremblest thou?  
 Thou lovest it, then, my wine?  
 Wouldst more of it? See, how glows,  
 Through the delicate, flush'd marble,  
 The red, creaming liquor,  
 Strown with dark seeds!  
 Drink, then! I chide thee not,  
 Deny thee not my bowl.  
 Come, stretch forth thy hand, then — so!  
 Drink — drink again!

*The Youth*

Thanks, gracious one!  
 Ah, the sweet fumes again!  
 More soft, ah me,  
 More subtle-winding  
 Than Pan's flute-music!  
 Faint — faint! Ah me,  
 Again the sweet sleep!

*Circe*

Hist! Thou — within there!  
 Come forth, Ulysses!  
 Art tired with hunting?  
 While we range the woodland,  
 See what the day brings.

*Ulysses*

Ever new magic!  
 Hast thou then lured hither,  
 Wonderful Goddess, by thy art,  
 The young, languid-eyed Ampelus,  
 Iacchus' darling —  
 Or some youth beloved of Pan,  
 Of Pan and the Nymphs?  
 That he sits, bending downward  
 His white, delicate neck  
 To the ivy-wreathed marge  
 Of thy cup; the bright, glancing vine-  
 leaves

That crown his hair,  
 Falling forward, mingling  
 With the dark ivy-plants —  
 His fawn-skin, half untied,  
 Smear'd with red wine-stains? Who is  
 he,  
 That he sits, overweigh'd  
 By fumes of wine and sleep,  
 So late, in thy portico?  
 What youth, Goddess, — what guest  
 Of Gods or mortals?

*Circe*

Hist! he wakes!  
 I lured him not hither, Ulysses.  
 Nay, ask him!

*The Youth*

Who speaks? Ah, who comes forth  
 To thy side, Goddess, from within?  
 How shall I name him?  
 This spare, dark-featured,  
 Quick-eyed stranger?  
 Ah, and I see too  
 His sailor's bonnet,  
 His short coat, travel-tarnish'd,  
 With one arm bare! —  
 Art thou not he, whom fame  
 This long time rumors  
 The favor'd guest of Circe, brought by  
 the waves?  
 Art thou he, stranger?  
 The wise Ulysses,  
 Laertes' son?

*Ulysses*

I am Ulysses.  
 And thou, too, sleeper?  
 Thy voice is sweet.  
 It may be thou hast follow'd  
 Through the islands some divine bard,  
 By age taught many things,  
 Age and the Muses;  
 And heard him delighting  
 The chiefs and people  
 In the banquet, and learn'd his songs,  
 Of Gods and Heroes,  
 Of war and arts,  
 And peopled cities,  
 Inland, or built  
 By the gray sea. — If so, then hail!  
 I honor and welcome thee.

*The Youth*

The Gods are happy.  
They turn on all sides  
Their shining eyes,  
And see below them  
The earth and men.

They see Tiresias  
Sitting, staff in hand,  
On the warm, grassy  
Asopus bank,  
His robe drawn over  
His old, sightless head,  
Revolving inly  
The doom of Thebes.

They see the Centaurs  
In the upper glens  
Of Pelion, in the streams,  
Where red-ferried ashes fringe  
The clear-brown shallow pools,  
With streaming flanks, and heads  
Rear'd proudly, snuffing  
The mountain wind.

They see the Indian  
Drifting, knife in hand,  
His frail boat moor'd to  
A floating isle thick-matted  
With large-leaved, low-creeping melon-  
plants,  
And the dark cucumber.  
He reaps, and stows them,  
Drifting — drifting; — round him,  
Round his green harvest-plot,  
Flow the cool lake-waves,  
The mountains ring them.

They see the Scythian  
On the wide stepp, unharnessing  
His wheel'd house at noon.  
He tethers his beast down, and makes  
his meal —  
Mares' milk, and bread  
Baked on the embers; — all around  
The boundless, waving grass-plains  
stretch, thick-starr'd  
With saffron and the yellow hollyhock  
And flag-leaved iris-flowers.  
Sitting in his cart  
He makes his meal; before him, for long  
miles,  
Alive with bright green lizards,  
And the springing bustard-fowl,  
The track, a straight black line,

Furrows the rich soil; here and there  
Clusters of lonely mounds  
Topp'd with rough-hewn,  
Gray, rain-blear'd statues, overpeer  
The sunny waste.

They see the ferry  
On the broad, clay-laden  
Lone Chorasmian stream; thereon,  
With snort and strain,  
Two horses, strongly swimming, tow  
The ferry-boat, with woven ropes  
To either bow  
Firm harness'd by the mane; a chief  
With shout and shaken spear,  
Stands at the prow, and guides them;  
but astern  
The cowering merchants, in long robes,  
Sit pale beside their wealth  
Of silk-bales and of balsam-drops,  
Of gold and ivory,  
Of turquoise-earth and amethyst,  
Jasper and chalcedony,  
And milk-barr'd onyx-stones.  
The loaded boat swings groaning  
In the yellow eddies;  
The Gods behold them.

They see the Heroes  
Sitting in the dark ship  
On the foamless, long-heaving  
Violet sea,  
At sunset nearing  
The Happy Islands.

These things, Ulysses,  
The wise bards also  
Behold and sing.  
But oh, what labor!  
O prince, what pain!

They too can see  
Tiresias; — but the Gods,  
Who give them vision,  
Added this law:  
That they should bear too  
His groping blindness,  
His dark foreboding,  
His scorn'd white hairs;  
Bear Hera's anger  
Through a life lengthen'd  
To seven ages.

They see the Centaurs  
On Pelion; — then they feel,  
They too, the maddening wine

Swell their large veins to bursting; in  
 wild pain  
 They feel the biting spears  
 Of the grim Lapithæ, and Theseus, drive,  
 Drive crashing through their bones;  
 they feel  
 High on a jutting rock in the red stream  
 Alcmena's dreadful son  
 Ply his bow; such a price  
 The Gods exact for song:  
 To become what we sing.

They see the Indian  
 On his mountain lake; but squalls  
 Make their skiff reel, and worms  
 In the unkind spring have gnawn  
 Their melon-harvest to the heart. — They  
 see  
 The Scythian; but long frosts  
 Parch them in winter-time on the bare  
 stepp,  
 Till they too fade like grass; they crawl  
 Like shadows forth in spring.

They see the merchants  
 On the Oxus stream; — but care  
 Must visit first them too, and make them  
 pale.  
 Whether, through whirling sand,  
 A cloud of desert robber-horse have  
 burst  
 Upon their caravan; or greedy kings,  
 In the wall'd cities the way passes  
 through,  
 Crush'd them with tolls; or fever-airs,  
 On some great river's marge,  
 Mown them down, far from home.

They see the Heroes  
 Near harbor; — but they share  
 Their lives, and former violent toil in  
 Thebes,  
 Seven-gated Thebes, or Troy;  
 Or where the echoing oars  
 Of Argo first  
 Startled the unknown sea.

The old Silenus  
 Came, lolling in the sunshine,  
 From the dewy forest-coverts,  
 This way at noon.  
 Sitting by me, while his Fauns  
 Down at the water-side  
 Sprinkled and smoothed  
 His drooping garland,  
 He told me these things.

But I, Ulysses,  
 Sitting on the warm steps,  
 Looking over the valley,  
 All day long, have seen,  
 Without pain, without labor,  
 Sometimes a wild-hair'd Mænad —  
 Sometimes a Faun with torches —  
 And sometimes, for a moment,  
 Passing through the dark stems  
 Flowing-robed, the beloved,  
 The desire, the divine,  
 Beloved Iacchus.

Ah, cool night-wind, tremulous stars!  
 Ah, glimmering water,  
 Fitful earth-murmur,  
 Dreaming woods!  
 Ah, golden-haired, strangely smiling  
 Goddess,  
 And thou, proved, much enduring,  
 Wave-toss'd Wanderer!  
 Who can stand still?  
 Ye fade, ye swim, ye waver before me —  
 The cup again!  
 Faster, faster,  
 O Circe, Goddess.  
 Let the wild, thronging train,  
 The bright procession  
 Of eddying forms,  
 Sweep through my soul! 1849.

## MEMORIAL VERSES

APRIL 1850

GOETHE in Weimar sleeps, and Greece,  
 Long since, saw Byron's struggle cease,  
 But one such death remain'd to come;  
 The last poetic voice is dumb —  
 We stand to-day by Wordsworth's tomb.

When Byron's eyes were shut in death,  
 We bow'd our head and held our breath.  
 He taught us little; but our soul  
 Had felt him like the thunder's roll.  
 With shivering heart the strife we saw  
 Of passion with eternal law;  
 And yet with reverential awe  
 We watch'd the fount of fiery life  
 Which served for that Titanic strife.

When Goethe's death was told, we said:  
 Sunk, then, is Europe's sagest head.  
 Physician of the iron age,  
 Goethe has done his pilgrimage.



He took the suffering human race,  
 He read each wound, each weakness clear;  
 And struck his finger on the place,  
 And said: *Thou ailest here, and here!*  
 He look'd on Europe's dying hour  
 Of fitful dream and feverish power;  
 His eye plunged down the weltering strife,  
 The turmoil of expiring life —  
 He said: *The end is everywhere,*  
*Art still has truth, take refuge there!*  
 And he was happy, if to know  
 Causes of things, and far below  
 His feet to see the lurid flow  
 Of terror, and insane distress,  
 And headlong fate, be happiness.

And Wordsworth! — Ah, pale ghosts,  
 rejoice!

For never has such soothing voice  
 Been to your shadowy world convey'd,  
 Since erst, at morn, some wandering  
 shade

Heard the clear song of Orpheus come  
 Through Hades, and the mournful gloom.  
 Wordsworth has gone from us — and ye,  
 Ah, may ye feel his voice as we!  
 He too upon a wintry clime  
 Had fallen — on this iron time  
 Of doubts, disputes, distractions, fears.  
 He found us when the age had bound  
 Our souls in its benumbing round;  
 He spoke, and loosed our heart in tears.  
 He laid us as we lay at birth  
 On the cool flowery lap of earth,  
 Smiles broke from us and we had ease;  
 The hills were round us, and the breeze  
 Went o'er the sun-lit fields again;  
 Our foreheads felt the wind and rain.  
 Our youth returned; for there was shed;  
 On spirits that had long been dead,  
 Spirits dried up and closely furl'd,  
 The freshness of the early world.

Ah! since dark days still bring to light  
 Man's prudence and man's fiery might,  
 Time may restore us in his course  
 Goethe's sage mind and Byron's force;  
 But where will Europe's latter hour  
 Again find Wordsworth's healing power?  
 Others will teach us how to dare,  
 And against fear our breast to steel;  
 Others will strengthen us to bear —  
 But who, ah! who, will make us feel?  
 The cloud of mortal destiny,  
 Others will front it fearlessly —  
 But who, like him, will put it by?

Keep fresh the grass upon his grave,  
 O Rotha, with thy living wave!  
 Sing him thy best! for few or none  
 Hears thy voice right, now he is gone.  
 1850.

### SELF-DECEPTION

SAY, what blinds us, that we claim the  
 glory  
 Of possessing powers not our share?  
 — Since man woke on earth, he knows  
 his story,  
 But, before we woke on earth, we were.

Long, long since, undower'd yet, our spirit  
 Roam'd, ere birth, the treasures of God;  
 Saw the gifts, the powers it might inherit,  
 Ask'd an outfit for its earthly road.

Then, as now, this tremulous, eager being  
 Strain'd and long'd and grasp'd each gift  
 it saw;

Then, as now, a Power beyond our seeing,  
 Staved us back, and gave our choice the  
 law.

Ah, whose hand that day through Heaven  
 guided

Man's new spirit, since it was not we?  
 Ah, who swayed our choice and who de-  
 cided

What our gifts, and what our wants  
 should be?

For, alas! he left us each retaining  
 Shreds of gifts which he refused in full.  
 Still these waste us with their hopeless  
 straining,  
 Still the attempt to use them proves  
 them null.

And on earth we wander, groping, reel-  
 ing;

Powers stir in us, stir and disappear.  
 Ah! and he who placed our master-feeling,  
 Fail'd to place that master-feeling clear.

We but dream we have our wish'd-for  
 powers,

Ends we seek we never shall attain.  
 Ah! *some* power exists there, which is  
 ours?

*Some* end is there, we indeed may gain?  
 1852,

## THE SECOND BEST

MODERATE tasks and moderate leisure,  
 Quiet living, strict-kept measure  
 Both in suffering and in pleasure —  
 'Tis for this thy nature yearns.

But so many books thou redest,  
 But so many schemes thou breedest,  
 But so many wishes feedest,  
 That thy poor head almost turns.

And (the world's so madly jangled,  
 Human things so fast entangled)  
 Nature's wish must now be strangled  
 For that best which she discerns.

So it *must* be! yet, while leading  
 A strain'd life, while overfeeding,  
 Like the rest, his wit with reading,  
 No small profit that man earns,

Who through all he meets can steer him,  
 Can reject what cannot clear him,  
 Cling to what can truly cheer him;  
 Who each day more surely learns

That an impulse, from the distance  
 Of his deepest, best existence,  
 To the words, "Hope, Light, Persistence,"  
 Strongly sets and truly burns.

1852.

## LYRIC STANZAS OF EMPEDOCLES

THE out-spread world to span  
 A cord the Gods first slung,  
 And then the soul of man  
 There, like a mirror, hung,  
 And bade the winds through space impel  
 the gusty toy.

Hither and thither spins  
 The wind-borne, mirroring soul,  
 A thousand glimpses wins,  
 And never sees a whole;  
 Looks once, and drives elsewhere, and  
 leaves its last employ.

The Gods laugh in their sleeve  
 To watch man doubt and fear  
 Who knows not what to believe  
 Since he sees nothing clear,  
 And dares stamp nothing false where he  
 finds nothing sure.

Is this, Pausanias, so?  
 And can our souls not strive,  
 But with the winds must go,  
 And hurry where they drive?  
 Is fate indeed so strong, man's strength  
 indeed so poor?

I will not judge. That man,  
 Howbeit, I judge as lost,  
 Whose mind allows a plan,  
 Which would degrade it most;  
 And he treats doubt the best who tries to  
 see least ill.

Be not, then, fear's blind slave!  
 Thou art my friend; to thee,  
 All knowledge that I have,  
 All skill I wield, are free.  
 Ask not the latest news of the last miracle,

Ask not what days and nights  
 In trance Pantheia lay,  
 But ask how thou such sights  
 May'st see without dismay;  
 Ask what most helps when known, thou  
 son of Anchitus!

What? hate, and awe, and shame  
 Fill thee to see our time;  
 Thou feeblest thy soul's frame  
 Shaken and out of chime?  
 What? life and chance go hard with thee  
 too, as with us;

Thy citizens, 'tis said,  
 Envy thee and oppress,  
 Thy goodness no men aid,  
 All strive to make it less;  
 Tyranny, pride and lust, fill Sicily's  
 abode;

Heaven is with earth at strife,  
 Signs make thy soul afraid,  
 The dead return to life,  
 Rivers are dried, winds stay'd;  
 Scarce can one think in calm, so threaten-  
 ing are the Gods;

And we feel, day and night,  
 The burden of ourselves —  
 Well, then, the wiser wight  
 In his own bosom delves,  
 And asks what ails him so, and gets what  
 cure he can.

The sophist sneers : Fool, take  
 Thy pleasure, right or wrong.  
 The pious wail : Forsake  
 A world these sophists throng.  
 Be neither saint nor sophist-led, but be a  
 man !

These hundred doctors try  
 To preach thee to their school.  
 We have the truth ! they cry ;  
 And yet their oracle,  
 Trumpet it as they will, is but the same  
 as thine.

Once read thy own breast right,  
 And thou hast done with fears ;  
 Man gets no other light,  
 Search he a thousand years.  
 Sink in thyself ! there ask what ails thee,  
 at that shrine !

What makes thee struggle and rave ?  
 Why are men ill at ease ? —  
 'Tis that the lot they have  
 Fails their own will to please ;  
 For man would make no murmuring were  
 his will obey'd.

And why is it, that still  
 Man with his lot thus fights ? —  
 'Tis that he makes this *will*  
 The measure of his *rights*,  
 And believes Nature outraged if his will's  
 gainsaid.

Couldst thou, Pausanias, learn  
 How deep a fault is this ;  
 Couldst thou but once discern  
 Thou hast no *right* to bliss,  
 No title from the Gods to welfare and  
 repose ;

Then thou wouldst look less mazed  
 Whene'er of bliss debarr'd,  
 Nor think the Gods were crazed  
 When thy own lot went hard.  
 But we are all the same — the fools of our  
 own woes !

For, from the first faint morn  
 Of life, the thirst for bliss  
 Deep in man's heart is born ;  
 And, sceptic as he is,  
 He fails not to judge clear if this be  
 quench'd or no.

Nor is the thirst to blame.  
 Man errs not that he deems  
 His welfare his true aim,  
 He errs because he dreams  
 The world does but exist that welfare to  
 bestow.

We mortals are no kings  
 For each of whom to sway  
 A new-made world up-springs,  
 Meant merely for his play ;  
 No, we are strangers here ; the world is  
 from of old.

In vain our pent wills fret,  
 And would the world subdue.  
 Limits we did not set  
 Condition all we do ;  
 Born into life we are, and life must be  
 our mould.

Born into life ! — man grows  
 Forth from his parents' stem,  
 And blends their bloods, as those  
 Of theirs are blent in them ;  
 So each new man strikes root into a far  
 fore-time.

Born into life ! — we bring  
 A bias with us here,  
 And, when here, each new thing  
 Affects us we come near ;  
 To tunes we did not call our being must  
 keep chime.

Born into life ! — in vain,  
 Opinions, those or these,  
 Unalter'd to retain  
 The obstinate mind decrees ;  
 Experience, like a sea, soaks all-effacing  
 in.

Born into life ! — who lists  
 May what is false hold dear,  
 And for himself make mists  
 Through which to see less clear ;  
 The world is what it is, for all our dust  
 and din.

Born into life ! — 'tis we,  
 And not the world, are new ;  
 Our cry for bliss, our plea,  
 Others have urged it too —  
 Our wants have all been felt, our errors  
 made before.

No eye could be too sound  
To observe a world so vast,  
No patience too profound  
To sort what's here amass'd;  
How man may here best live no care too  
great to explore.

But we — as some rude guest  
Would change, where'er he roam,  
The manners there profess'd  
To those he brings from home —  
We mark not the world's course, but  
would have *it* take *ours*.

The world's course proves the terms  
On which man wins content;  
Reason the proof confirms —  
We spurn it, and invent  
A false course for the world, and for our-  
selves, false powers.

Riches we wish to get,  
Yet remain spendthrifts still;  
We would have health, and yet  
Still use our bodies ill;  
Bafflers of our own prayers, from youth  
to life's last scenes.

We would have inward peace,  
Yet will not look within;  
We would have misery cease,  
Yet will not cease from sin;  
We want all pleasant ends, but will use  
no harsh means;

We do not what we ought,  
What we ought not, we do,  
And lean upon the thought  
That chance will bring us through;  
But our own acts, for good or ill, are  
mightier powers.

Yet, even when man forsakes  
All sin, — is just, is pure,  
Abandons all which makes  
His welfare insecure, —  
Other existences there are, that clash  
with ours.

Like us, the lightning-fires  
Love to have scope and play;  
The stream, like us, desires  
An unimpeded way;  
Like us, the Libyan wind delights to  
roam at large.

Streams will not curb their pride  
The just man not to entomb,  
Nor lightnings go aside  
To give his virtues room;  
Nor is that wind less rough which blows  
a good man's barge.

Nature, with equal mind,  
Sees all her sons at play;  
Sees man control the wind,  
The wind sweep man away;  
Allows the proudly-riding and the  
foundering bark.

And, lastly, though of ours  
No weakness spoil our lot,  
Though the non-human powers  
Of Nature harm not us,  
The ill deeds of other men make often *our*  
life dark.

What were the wise man's plan? —  
Through this sharp, toil-set life,  
To work as best he can,  
And win what's won by strife. —  
But we an easier way to cheat our pains  
have found.

Scratch'd by a fall, with moans  
As children of weak age  
Lend life to the dumb stones  
Whereon to vent their rage,  
And bend their little fists, and rate the  
senseless ground;

So, loath to suffer mute,  
We, peopling the void air,  
Make Gods to whom to impute  
The ills we ought to bear;  
With God and Fate to rail at, suffering  
easily.

Yet grant — as sense long miss'd  
Things that are now perceived,  
And much may still exist  
Which is not yet believed —  
Grant that the world were full of Gods  
we cannot see;

All things the world which fill  
Of but one stuff are spun,  
That we who rail are still,  
With what we rail at, one;  
One with the o'erlabored Power that  
through the breadth and length

Of earth, and air, and sea,  
 In men, and plants, and stones,  
 Hath toil perpetually,  
 And travails, pants, and moans;  
 Fain would do all things well, but some-  
 times fails in strength.

And patiently exact  
 This universal God  
 Alike to any act  
 Proceeds at any nod,  
 And quietly declaims the cursings of him-  
 self.

This is not what man hates,  
 Yet he can curse but this,  
 Harsh Gods and hostile Fates  
 Are dreams! this only *is*  
 Is everywhere; sustains the wise, the  
 foolish elf.

Not only, in the intent  
 To attach blame elsewhere,  
 Do we at will invent  
 Stern Powers who make their care  
 To embitter human life, malignant  
 Deities;

But, next, we would reverse  
 The scheme ourselves have spun,  
 And what we made to curse  
 We now would lean upon,  
 And feign kind Gods who perfect what  
 man vainly tries.

Look, the world tempts our eye,  
 And we would know it all!  
 We map the starry sky,  
 We mine this earthen ball,  
 We measure the sea-tides, we number the  
 the sea-sands;

We scrutinize the dates  
 Of long-past human things,  
 The bounds of effaced states,  
 The lines of deceased kings;  
 We search out dead men's words, and  
 works of dead men's hands;

We shut our eyes, and muse  
 How our own minds are made,  
 What springs of thought they use,  
 How righten'd, how betray'd —  
 And spend our wit to name what most  
 employ unnamed.

But still, as we proceed,  
 The mass swells more and more  
 Of volumes yet to read,  
 Of secrets yet to explore.  
 Our hair grows gray, our eyes are dimm'd,  
 our heat is tamed;

We rest our faculties,  
 And thus address the Gods:  
 "True science if there is,  
 It stays in your abodes!  
 Man's measures cannot mete the im-  
 measurable All.

"You only can take in  
 The world's immense design.  
 Our desperate search was sin,  
 Which henceforth we resign,  
 Sure only that your mind sees all things  
 which befall."

Fools! That in man's brief term  
 He cannot all things view,  
 Affords no ground to affirm  
 That there are Gods who do;  
 Nor does being weary prove that he has  
 where to rest.

Again. — Our youthful blood  
 Claims rapture as its right;  
 The world, a rolling flood  
 Of newness and delight,  
 Draws in the enamor'd gazer to its shining  
 breast;

Pleasure, to our hot grasp,  
 Gives flowers after flowers;  
 With passionate warmth we clasp  
 Hand after hand in ours;  
 Now do we soon perceive how fast our  
 youth is spent.

At once our eyes grow clear!  
 We see, in blank dismay,  
 Year posting after year,  
 Sense after sense decay;  
 Our shivering heart is mined by secret  
 discontent;

Yet still, in spite of truth,  
 In spite of hopes entomb'd,  
 That longing of our youth  
 Burns ever unconsumed,  
 Still hungrier for delight as delights grow  
 more rare.



We pause; we hush our heart,  
And thus address the Gods:  
"The world hath fail'd to impart  
The joy our youth forebodes,  
Fail'd to fill up the void which in our  
breasts we bear.

"Changeful till now, we still  
Look'd on to something new;  
Let us, with changeless will,  
Henceforth look on to you,  
To find with you the joy we in vain here  
require!"

Fools! That so often here  
Happiness mock'd our prayer,  
I think, might make us fear  
A like event elsewhere;  
Make us, not fly to dreams, but moderate  
desire.

And yet, for those who know  
Themselves, who wisely take  
Their way through life, and bow  
To what they cannot break,  
Why should I say that life need yield but  
*moderate* bliss?

Shall we, with temper spoil'd,  
Health sapp'd by living ill,  
And judgment all embroil'd  
By sadness and self-will,  
Shall *we* judge what for man is not true  
bliss or is?

Is it so small a thing  
To have enjoy'd the sun,  
To have lived light in the spring,  
To have loved, to have thought, to  
have done;  
To have advanced true friends, and beat  
down baffling foes —

That we must feign a bliss  
Of doubtful future date,  
And, while we dream on this,  
Lose all our present state,  
And relegate to worlds yet distant our  
repose?

Not much, I know, you prize  
What pleasures may be had,  
Who look on life with eyes  
Estranged, like mine, and sad;  
And yet the village-churl feels the truth  
more than you.

Who's loath to leave this life  
Which to him little yields —  
His hard-task'd sunburnt wife,  
His often-labor'd fields,  
The boors with whom he talk'd, the  
country-spots he knew.

But thou, because thou hear'st  
Men scoff at Heaven and Fate,  
Because the Gods thou fear'st  
Fail to make blest thy state,  
Tremblest, and wilt not dare to trust the  
joys there are!

I say: Fear not! Life still  
Leaves human effort scope.  
But, since life teems with ill,  
Nurse no extravagant hope;  
Because thou must not dream, thou  
need'st not then despair!

1852.

## CALLICLES' SONG

FROM EMPEDOCLES ON ETNA

THROUGH the black, rushing smoke-  
bursts,  
Thick breaks the red flame;  
All Etna heaves fiercely  
Her forest-clothed frame.

Not here, O Apollo!  
Are haunts meet for thee.  
But, where Helicon breaks down  
In cliff to the sea,

Where the moon-silver'd inlets  
Send far their light voice  
Up the still vale of Thisbe,  
O speed, and rejoice!

On the sward at the cliff-top  
Lie strewn the white flocks,  
On the cliff-side the pigeons  
Roost deep in the rocks.

In the moonlight the shepherds,  
Soft lull'd by the rills,  
Lie wrapped in their blankets  
Asleep on the hills.

— What forms are these coming  
So white through the gloom?  
What garments out-glistening  
The gold-flower'd broom?

What sweet-breathing presence  
Out-perfumes the thyme?  
What voices enrapture  
The night's balmy prime? —

'Tis Apollo comes leading  
His choir, the Nine.  
— The leader is fairest,  
But all are divine.

They are lost in the hollows!  
They stream up again!  
What seeks on this mountain  
The glorified train? —

They bathe on this mountain,  
In the spring by their road;  
Then on to Olympus,  
Their endless abode.

— Whose praise do they mention.  
Of what is it told? —  
What will be for ever;  
What was from of old.

First hymn they the Father  
Of all things; and then,  
The rest of immortals,  
The action of men;

The day in his hotness,  
The strife with the palm;  
The night in her silence,  
The stars in their calm.

1852.

## THE YOUTH OF NATURE

RAISED are the dripping oars,  
Silent the boat! the lake,  
Lovely and soft as a dream,  
Swims in the sheen of the moon.  
The mountains stand at its head  
Clear in the pure June-night,  
But the valleys are flooded with haze.  
Rydal and Fairfield are there;  
In the shadow Wordsworth lies dead.  
So it is, so it will be for aye.  
Nature is fresh as of old,  
Is lovely; a mortal is dead.

The spots which recall him survive,  
For he lent a new life to these hills.  
The Pillar still broods o'er the fields  
Which border Ennerdale Lake,  
And Egremont sleeps by the sea.

The gleam of The Evening Star  
Twinkles on Grasmere no more,  
But ruin'd and solemn and gray  
The sheepfold of Michael survives;  
And, far to the south, the heath  
Still blows in the Quantock coombs  
By the favorite waters of Ruth.  
These survive! — yet not without pain,  
Pain and dejection to-night,  
Can I feel that their poet is gone.  
He grew old in an age he condemn'd.  
He look'd on the rushing decay  
Of the times which had shelter'd his youth,  
Felt the dissolving throes  
Of a social order he loved;  
Outlived his brethren, his peers;  
And, like the Theban seer,  
Died in his enemies' day.

Cold bubbled the spring of Tilphusa,  
Copais lay bright in the moon,  
Helicon glass'd in the lake  
Its firs, and afar rose the peaks  
Of Parnassus, snowily clear;  
Thebes was behind him in flames,  
And the clang of arms in his ear,  
When his awe-struck captors led  
The Theban seer to the spring.  
Tiresias drank and died,  
Nor did reviving Thebes  
See such a prophet again.

Well may we mourn, when the head  
Of a sacred poet lies low  
In an age which can rear them no more!  
The complaining millions of men  
Darken in labor and pain;  
But he was a priest to us all  
Of the wonder and bloom of the world,  
Which we saw with his eyes, and were  
glad.  
He is dead, and the fruit-bearing day  
Of his race is past on the earth;  
And darkness returns to our eyes.

For, oh! is it you, is it you,  
Moonlight, and shadow, and lake,  
And mountains, that fill us with joy,  
Or the poet who sings you so well?  
Is it you, O beauty, O grace,  
O charm, O romance, that we feel,  
Or the voice which reveals what you are?  
Are ye, like daylight and sun,  
Shared and rejoiced in by all?  
Or are ye immersed in the mass  
Of matter, and hard to extract,

Or sunk at the core of the world  
To keep for the most to discern?  
Like stars in the deep of the sky,  
Which arise on the glass of the sage,  
But are lost when their watcher is gone.

"They are here" — I heard, as men heard  
In Mysian Ida the voice  
Of the Mighty Mother, or Crete,  
The murmur of Nature reply —  
"Loveliness, magic, and grace,  
They are here! they are set in the world.  
They abide; and the finest of souls  
Hath not been thrill'd by them all,  
Nor the dullest been dead to them quite.  
The poet who sings them may die,  
But they are immortal and live,  
For they are the life of the world.  
Will ye not learn it, and know,  
When ye mourn that a poet is dead,  
That the singer was less than his themes,  
Life, and emotion, and I?"

"More than the singer are these.  
Weak is the tremor of pain  
That thrills in his mournfullest chord  
To that which once ran through his soul.  
Cold the elation of joy  
In his gladdest, airiest song,  
To that which of old in his youth  
Fill'd him and made him divine.  
Hardly his voice at its best  
Gives us a sense of the awe,  
The vastness, the grandeur, the gloom  
Of the unlit gulf of himself.

"Ye know not yourselves; and your  
bards —

The clearest, the best, who have read  
Most in themselves — have beheld  
Less than they left unreveal'd.  
Yet express not yourselves; — can you  
make

With marble, with color, with word,  
What charm'd you in others re-live?  
Can thy pencil, O artist! restore  
The figure, the bloom of thy love,  
As she was in her morning of spring?  
Canst thou paint the ineffable smile  
Of her eyes as they rested on thine?  
Can the image of life have the glow,  
The motion of life itself?

"Yourself and your fellows ye know  
not; and me,  
The mateless, the one, will ye know?"

Will ye scan me, and read me, and tell  
Of the thoughts that ferment in my  
breast,  
My longing, my sadness, my joy?  
Will ye claim for your great ones the  
gift

To have render'd the gleam of my skies,  
To have echoed the moan of my seas,  
Utter'd the voice of my hills?  
When your great ones depart, will ye  
say:

*All things have suffer'd a loss,  
Nature is hid in their grave?*

"Race after race, man after man,  
Have thought that my secret was theirs,  
Have dream'd that I lived but for them,  
That they were my glory and joy,  
— They are dust, they are changed, they  
are gone!

I remain." 1852.

#### SELF-DEPENDENCE

WEARY of myself, and sick of asking  
What I am, and what I ought to be,  
At this vessel's prow I stand, which bears  
me  
Forwards, forwards, o'er the starlit sea.

And a look of passionate desire  
O'er the sea and to the stars I send:  
"Ye who from my childhood up have  
calm'd me,  
Calm me, ah, compose me to the end!

"Ah, once more," I cried, "ye stars, ye  
waters,  
On my heart your mighty charm renew;  
Still, still let me, as I gaze upon you,  
Feel my soul becoming vast like you!"

From the intense, clear, star-sown vault  
of heaven,  
Over the lit sea's unquiet way,  
In the rustling night-air came the answer:  
"Wouldst thou *be* as these are? *Live* as  
they.

"Unaffrighted by the silence round them,  
Undistracted by the sights they see,  
These demand not that the things with-  
out them  
Yield them love, amusement, sympathy.

"And with joy the stars perform their shining,  
And the sea its long moon-silver'd roll;  
For self-poised they live, nor pine with noting  
All the fever of some differing soul.

"Bounded by themselves, and unregardful  
In what state God's other works may be,  
In their own states all their powers pouring,  
These attain the mighty life you see."

O air-born voice! long since, severely clear,  
A cry like thine in mine own heart I hear:  
"Resolve to be thyself; and know that he,  
Who finds himself, loses his misery!"  
1852.

### MORALITY

WE cannot kindle when we will  
The fire which in the heart resides;  
The spirit bloweth and is still,  
In mystery our soul abides.  
But tasks in hours of insight will'd  
Can be through hours of gloom fulfill'd.

With aching hands and bleeding feet  
We dig and heap, lay stone on stone  
We bear the burden and the heat  
Of the long day, and wish 'twere done.  
Not till the hours of light return,  
All we have built do we discern.

Then, when the clouds are off the soul,  
When thou dost bask in Nature's eye,  
Ask, how *she* view'd thy self-control,  
Thy struggling, task'd morality —  
Nature, whose free, light, cheerful air,  
Oft made thee, in thy gloom, despair.

And she, whose censure thou dost dread,  
Whose eye thou wast afraid to seek,  
See, on her face a glow is spread,  
A strong emotion on her cheek!  
"Ah, child!" she cries, "that strife  
divine,  
Whence was it, for it is not mine?"

"There is no effort on *my* brow —  
I do not strive, I do not weep;  
I rush with the swift spheres and glow  
In joy, and when I will, I sleep.

Yet that severe, that earnest air,  
I saw, I felt it once — but where?"

"I knew not yet the gauge of time,  
Nor wore the manacles of space;  
I felt it in some other clime,  
I saw it in some other place.  
'Twas when the heavenly house I trod,  
And lay upon the breast of God."  
1852.

### A SUMMER NIGHT

In the deserted, moon-blanch'd street,  
How lonely rings the echo of my feet!  
Those windows, which I gaze at, frown,  
Silent and white, unopening down,  
Repellent as the world; — but see,  
A break between the housetops shows  
The moon! and, lost behind her, fading  
dim

Into the dewy dark obscurity  
Down at the far horizon's rim,  
Doth a whole tract of heaven disclose!  
And to my mind the thought  
Is on a sudden brought  
Of a past night, and a far different scene.  
Headlands stood out into the moonlit  
deep

As clearly as at noon;  
The spring-tide's brimming flow  
Heaved dazzlingly between;

Houses, with long white sweep,  
Girdled the glistening bay;  
Behind, through the soft air,  
The blue haze-cradled mountains spread  
away,  
The night was far more fair —  
But the same restless paces to and fro,  
And the same vainly throbbing heart was  
there,  
And the same bright, calm moon.

And the calm moonlight seems to say:  
*Hast thou then still the old unquiet breast,  
Which neither deadens into rest,  
Nor ever feels the fiery glow  
That whirls the spirit from itself away,  
But fluctuates to and fro,  
Never by passion quite possess'd  
And never quite benumb'd by the world's  
sway? —*

And I, I know not if to pray  
Still to be what I am, or yield and be  
Like all the other men I see.

For most men in a brazen prison live,  
Where, in the sun's hot eye,  
With heads bent o'er their toil, they  
languidly  
Their lives to some unmeaning taskwork  
give,  
Dreaming of nought beyond their prison  
wall.

And as, year after year,  
Fresh products of their barren labor fall  
From their tired hands, and rest  
Never yet comes more near,  
Gloom settles slowly down o'er their  
breast;

And while they try to stem  
The waves of mournful thought by which  
they are pressed,  
Death in their prison reaches them,  
Unfreed, having seen nothing, still un-  
blest.

And the rest, a few,  
Escape their prison and depart  
On the wide ocean of life anew.  
There the freed prisoner, where'er his  
heart

Listeth, still sail;  
Nor doth he know how there prevail,  
Despotic on that sea,  
Trade-winds which cross it from eternity  
Awhile he holds some false way, unde-  
barr'd

By thwarting signs, and braves  
The freshening wind and blackening  
waves

And then the tempest strikes him; and  
between

The lightning-bursts is seen  
Only a driving wreck,  
And the pale master on his spar-strewn  
deck

With anguish'd face and flying hair  
Grasping the rudder hard,  
Still bent to make some port he knows  
not where,

Still standing for some false, impossible  
shore.

And sterner comes the roar  
Of sea and wind, and through the deepen-  
ing gloom

Fainter and fainter wreck and helmsman  
loom,

And he too disappears, and comes no more.

Is there no life, but these alone?  
Madman or slave, must man be one?

Plainness and clearness without shadow of  
stain!

Clearness divine!

Ye heavens, whose pure dark regions  
have no sign

Of languor, though so calm, and, though  
so great,

Are yet untroubled and unpassionate;  
Who, though so noble, share in the world's  
toil,

And, though so task'd, keep free from  
dust and soil!

I will not say that your mild deeps retain  
A tinge, it may be, of their silent pain  
Who have long'd deeply once, and long'd  
in vain —

But I will rather say that you remain  
A world above man's head, to let him see  
How boundless might his soul's horizons  
be,

How vast, yet of what clear transparency!  
How it were good to abide there, and  
breathe free;

How fair a lot to fill  
Is left to each man still! 1852.

### THE BURIED LIFE

LIGHT flows our war of mocking words,  
and yet,

Behold, with tears mine eyes are wet!  
I feel a nameless sadness o'er me roll,  
Yes, yes, we know that we can jest,  
We know, we know that we can smile!  
But there's a something in this breast,  
To which thy light words bring no rest.  
And thy gay smiles no anodyne.  
Give me thy hand, and hush awhile,  
And turn those limpid eyes on mine,  
And let me read there, love! thy inmost  
soul.

Alas! is even love too weak  
To unlock the heart, and let it speak?  
Are even lovers powerless to reveal  
To one another what indeed they feel?  
I knew the mass of men conceal'd  
Their thoughts, for fear that if reveal'd  
They would by other men be met  
With blank indifference, or with blame  
reproved;

I knew they lived and moved  
Trick'd in disguises, alien to the rest  
Of men, and alien to themselves — and yet  
The same heart beats in every human  
breast!



But we, my love! — doth a like spell benumb  
Our hearts, our voices? — must we too be dumb?

Ah! well for us, if even we,  
Even for a moment, can get free  
Our heart, and have our lips unchain'd;  
For that which seals them hath been  
deep-ordain'd!

Fate, which foresaw  
How frivolous a baby man would be —  
By what distractions he would be possess'd,  
How he would pour himself in every strife,  
And well-nigh change his own identity —  
That it might keep from his capricious play  
His genuine self, and force him to obey  
Even in his own despite his being's law,  
Bade through the deep recesses of our breast  
The unregarded river of our life  
Pursue with indiscernible flow its way;  
And that we should not see  
The buried stream, and seem to be  
Eddying at large in blind uncertainty,  
Though driving on with it eternally.

But often, in the world's most crowded streets,  
But often, in the din of strife,  
There rises an unspeakable desire  
After the knowledge of our buried life;  
A thirst to spend our fire and restless force  
In tracking out our true, original course;  
A longing to inquire  
Into the mystery of this heart which beats  
So wild, so deep in us — to know  
Whence our lives come and where they go.  
And many a man in his own breast then delves,  
But deep enough, alas! none ever mines.  
And we have been on many thousand lines,  
And we have shown, on each, spirit and power;  
But hardly have we, for one little hour,  
Been on our own line, have we been ourselves —  
Hardly had skill to utter one of all  
The nameless feelings that course through  
our breast.

But they course on for ever unexpress'd.  
And long we try in vain to speak and act  
Our hidden self, and what we say and do  
Is eloquent, is well — but 'tis not true!  
And then we will no more be rack'd  
With inward striving, and demand  
Of all the thousand nothings of the hour  
Their stupefying power;  
Ah yes, and they benumb us at our call!  
Yet still, from time to time, vague and forlorn,  
From the soul's subterranean depth upborne  
As from an infinitely distant land,  
Come airs, and floating echoes, and convey  
A melancholy into all our day.

Only — but this is rare —  
When a beloved hand is laid in ours,  
When, jaded with the rush and glare  
Of the interminable hours,  
Our eyes can in another's eyes read clear,  
When our world-deafen'd ear  
Is by the tones of a loved voice caress'd —  
A bolt is shot back somewhere in our breast,  
And a lost pulse of feeling stirs again.  
The eye sinks inward, and the heart lies plain,  
And what we mean, we say, and what we would, we know.  
A man becomes aware of his life's flow,  
And hears its winding murmur; and he sees  
The meadows where it glides, the sun,  
the breeze.

And there arrives a lull in the hot race  
Wherein he doth for ever chase  
That flying and elusive shadow, rest.  
An air of coolness plays upon his face,  
And an unwonted calm pervades his breast.  
And then he thinks he knows  
The hills where his life rose,  
And the sea where it goes. 1852.

## LINES

WRITTEN IN KENSINGTON GARDENS

IN this lone, open glade I lie,  
Screen'd by deep boughs on either hand;  
And at its end, to stay the eye,  
Those black-crown'd, red-boled pine-trees  
stand!

Birds here make song, each bird has his,  
Across the girdling city's hum.  
How green under the boughs it is!  
How thick the tremulous sheep-cries  
come!

Sometimes a child will cross the glade  
To take his nurse his broken toy;  
Sometimes a thrush flit overhead  
Deep in her unknown day's employ.

Here at my feet what wonders pass,  
What endless, active life is here!  
What blowing daisies, fragrant grass!  
An air-stirr'd forest, fresh and clear.

Scarce fresher is the mountain-sod  
Where the tired angler lies, stretch'd out,  
And, eased of basket and of rod,  
Counts his day's spoil, the spotted trout.

In the huge world, which roars hard by,  
Be others happy if they can!  
But in my helpless cradle I  
Was breathed on by the rural Pan.

I, on men's impious uproar hurl'd,  
Think often, as I hear them rave,  
That peace has left the upper world  
And now keeps only in the grave.

Yet here is peace for ever new!  
When I who watch them am away,  
Still all things in this glade go through  
The changes of their quiet day.

Then to their happy rest they pass!  
The flowers upclose, the birds are fed,  
The night comes down upon the grass,  
The child sleeps warmly in his bed.

Calm soul of all things! make it mine  
To feel, amid the city's jar,  
That there abides a peace of thine,  
Man did not make, and cannot mar.

The will to neither strive nor cry,  
The power to feel with others give!  
Calm, calm me more! nor let me die  
Before I have begun to live. 1852.

### THE FUTURE

A WANDERER is man from his birth.  
He was born in a ship  
On the breast of the river of Time;  
Brimming with wonder and joy

He spreads out his arms to the light,  
Rivets his gaze on the banks of the  
stream.

As what he sees is, so have his thoughts  
been.

Whether he wakes  
Where the snowy mountainous pass,  
Echoing the screams of the eagles,  
Hems in its gorges the bed  
Of the new-born clear-flowing stream;  
Whether he first sees light  
Where the river in gleaming rings  
Sluggishly winds through the plain;  
Whether in sound of the swallowing sea --  
As is the world on the banks,  
So is the mind of the man.

Vainly does each, as he glides,  
Fable and dream  
Of the lands which the river of Time  
Had left ere he woke on its breast,  
Or shall reach when his eyes have been  
closed.

On the tract where he sails  
He wots of; only the thoughts,  
Raised by the objects he passes, are his.

Who can see the green earth any more  
As she was by the sources of Time?  
Who imagines her fields as they lay  
In the sunshine, unworn by the plough?  
Who thinks as they thought,  
The tribes who then roam'd on her  
breast,

Her vigorous, primitive sons?  
What girl  
Now reads in her bosom as clear  
As Rebekah read, when she sate  
At eve by the palm-shaded well?  
Who guards in her breast  
As deep, as pellucid a spring  
Of feeling, as tranquil, as sure?

What bard,  
At the height of his vision, can deem  
Of God, of the world, of the soul,  
With a plainness as near,  
As flashing as Moses felt  
When he lay in the night by his flock  
On the starlit Arabian waste?  
Can rise and obey  
The beck of the Spirit like him?

This tract which the river of Time  
Now flows through with us, is the plain.

Gone is the calm of its earlier shore.  
 Border'd by cities and hoarse  
 With a thousand cries is its stream.  
 And we on its breast, our minds  
 Are confus'd as the cries which we hear,  
 Changing and shot as the sights which we  
 see.

And we say that repose had fled  
 For ever the course of the river of Time.  
 That cities will crowd to its edge  
 In a blacker, incessanter line;  
 That the din will be more on its banks,  
 Denser the trade on its stream,  
 Flatter the plain where it flows,  
 Fiercer the sun overhead.  
 That never will those on its breast  
 See an ennobling sight,  
 Drink of the feeling of quiet again.

But what was before us we know not,  
 And we know not what shall succeed.

Haply, the river of Time —  
 As it grows, as the towns on its marge  
 Fling their wavering lights  
 On a wider, statelier stream —  
 May acquire, if not the calm  
 Of its early mountainous shore,  
 Yet a solemn peace of its own.

And the width of the waters, the hush  
 Of the gray expanse where he floats,  
 Freshening its current and spotted with  
 foam  
 As it draws to the Ocean, may strike  
 Peace to the soul of the man on its  
 breast —

As the pale waste widens around him,  
 As the banks fade dimmer away,  
 As the stars come out, and the night-wind  
 Brings up the stream  
 Murmurs and scents of the infinite sea.

1852.

# STANZAS IN MEMORY OF THE AUTHOR OF "OBERMANN"<sup>1</sup>

In front the awful Alpine track  
 Crawls up its rocky stair;  
 The autumn storm-winds drive the rack,  
 Close o'er it, in the air.

<sup>1</sup> The author of *Obermann*, Étienne Pivert de Senancour, has little celebrity in France, his own country; and out of France he is almost unknown. But the profound inwardness, the austere sincerity, of his principal work, *Obermann*, the delicate feeling

Behind are the abandon'd baths<sup>1</sup>  
 Mute in their meadows lone;  
 The leaves are on the valley-paths,  
 The mists are on the Rhone —

The white mists rolling like a sea!  
 I hear the torrents roar.  
 — Yes, Obermann, all speaks of thee;  
 I feel thee near once more!

I turn thy leaves! I feel their breath  
 Once more upon me roll;  
 That air of languor, cold, and death,  
 Which brooded o'er thy soul.

for nature which it exhibits, and the melancholy eloquence of many passages of it, have attracted and charmed some of the most remarkable spirits of this century, such as George Sand and Sainte-Beuve, and will probably always find a certain number of spirits whom they touch and interest.

Senancour was born in 1770. He was educated for the priesthood, and passed some time in the seminary of St. Sulpice; broke away from the Seminary and from France itself, and passed some years in Switzerland, where he married; returned to France in middle life, and followed thenceforward the career of a man of letters, but with hardly any fame or success. He died an old man in 1846, desiring that on his grave might be placed these words only: *Éternité, deviens mon asile!*

The influence of Rousseau, and certain affinities with more famous and fortunate authors of his own day, — Chateaubriand and Madame de Staël, — are everywhere visible in Senancour. But though, like these eminent personages, he may be called a sentimental writer, and though *Obermann*, a collection of letters from Switzerland treating almost entirely of nature and of the human soul, may be called a work of sentiment, Senancour has a gravity and severity which distinguish him from all other writers of the sentimental school. The world is with him in his solitude far less than it is with them; of all writers he is the most perfectly isolated and the least attitudinizing. His chief work, too, has a value and power of its own, apart from these merits of its author. The stir of all the main forces, by which modern life is and has been impelled, lives in the letters of *Obermann*; the dissolving agencies of the eighteenth century, the fiery storm of the French Revolution, the first faint promise and dawn of that new world which our own time is but more fully bringing to light, — all these are to be felt, almost to be touched, there. To me, indeed, it will always seem that the impressiveness of this production can hardly be rated too high.

Beside *Obermann* there is one other of Senancour's works which, for those spirits who feel his attraction, is very interesting; its title is, *Libres Méditations d'un Solitaire Inconnu*. (Arnold's note. The passage of George Sand alluded to may be found in her *Questions d'art et de littérature*. Sainte-Beuve has several times written of Senancour; especially in his *Portraits contemporains*, Vol. I, and in *Chateaubriand et son groupe littéraire*, Chap. 14.)

<sup>1</sup> The Baths of Leuk. This poem was conceived, and partly composed, in the valley going down from the foot of the Gemmi Pass towards the Rhone. (Arnold.)

Fly hence, poor wretch, whoe'er thou  
     art,  
 Condemn'd to cast about,  
 All shipwreck in thy own weak heart,  
 For comfort from without!

A fever in these pages burns  
 Beneath the calm they feign;  
 A wounded human spirit turns,  
 Here, on its bed of pain.

Yes, though the virgin mountain-air  
 Fresh through these pages blows;  
 Though to these leaves the glaciers spare  
 The soul of their white snows;

Though here a mountain-murmur swells  
 Of many a dark-bough'd pine;  
 Though, as you read, you hear the bells  
 Of the high-pasturing kine —

Yet, through the hum of torrent lone,  
 And brooding mountain-bee,  
 There sobs I know not what ground-  
     tone  
 Of human agony.

Is it for this, because the sound  
 Is fraught too deep with pain,  
 That, Obermann! the world around  
 So little loves thy strain?

Some secrets may the poet tell,  
 For the world loves new ways;  
 To tell too deep ones is not well —  
 It knows not what he says.

Yet, of the spirits who have reign'd  
 In this our troubled day,  
 I know but two, who have attain'd  
 Save thee, to see their way.

By England's lakes, in gray old age,  
 His quiet home one keeps;  
 And one, the strong much-toiling sage,  
 In German Weimar sleeps.

But Wordsworth's eyes avert their ken  
 From half of human fate;  
 And Goethe's course few sons of men  
 May think to emulate.

For he pursued a lonely road,  
 His eyes on Nature's plan;  
 Neither made man too much a God,  
 Nor God too much a man.

Strong was he, with a spirit free  
 From mists, and sane, and clear;  
 Clearer, how much! than ours — yet we  
 Have a worse course to steer.

For though his manhood bore the blast  
 Of a tremendous time,  
 Yet in a tranquil world was pass'd  
 His tenderer youthful prime.

But we, brought forth and rear'd in hours  
 Of change, alarm, surprise —  
 What shelter to grow ripe is ours?  
 What leisure to grow wise?

Like children bathing on the shore,  
 Buried a wave beneath,  
 The second wave succeeds, before  
 We have had time to breathe.

Too fast we live, too much are tried,  
 Too harass'd, to attain  
 Wordsworth's sweet calm, or Goethe's  
     wide  
 And luminous view to gain.

And then we turn, thou sadder sage,  
 To thee! we feel thy spell!  
 — The hopeless tangle of our age,  
 Thou too hast scann'd it well!

Immovable thou sittest, still  
 As death, composed to bear!  
 Thy head is clear, thy feeling chill,  
 And icy thy despair.

Yes, as the son of Thetis said,  
 I hear thee saying now:  
*Greater by far than thou are dead;  
 Strive not! die also thou!*

Ah! two desires toss about  
 The poet's feverish blood.  
 One drives him to the world without  
 And one to solitude.

*The glow, he cries, the thrill of life,  
 Where, where do these abound? —  
 Not in the world, not in the strife  
 Of men, shall they be found.*

He who hath watch'd, not shared, the  
     strife,  
 Knows how the day hath gone.  
 He only lives with the world's life,  
 Who hath renounced his own.

To thee we come, then! Clouds are roll'd  
Where thou, O seer! art set;  
Thy realm of thought is drear and cold —  
The world is colder yet!

And thou hast pleasures, too, to share  
With those who come to thee —  
Balms floating on thy mountain-air,  
And healing sights to see.

How often, where the slopes are green  
On Jaman, hast thou sate  
By some high chalet-door, and seen  
The summer-day grow late;

And darkness steal o'er the wet grass  
With the pale crocus starr'd,  
And reach that glimmering sheet of glass  
Beneath the piny sward,

Lake Leman's waters, far below!  
And watch'd the rosy light  
Fade from the distant peaks of snow;  
And on the air of night

Heard accents of the eternal tongue  
Through the pine branches play —  
Listen'd and felt thyself grow young!  
Listen'd and wept — Away!

Away the dreams that but deceive  
And thou, sad guide, adieu!  
I go, fate drives me; but I leave  
Half of my life with you.

We, in some unknown Power's employ,  
Move on a rigorous line;  
Can neither, when we will, enjoy,  
Nor, when we will, resign.

I in the world must live; but thou,  
Thou melancholy shade!  
Wilt not, if thou canst see me now,  
Condemn me, nor upbraid.

For thou art gone away from earth,  
And place with those dost claim,  
The Children of the Second Birth,  
Whom the world could not tame;

And with that small, transfigured band,  
Who many a different way  
Conducted to their common land,  
Thou learn'st to think as they.

Christian and pagan, king and slave,  
Soldier and anchorite,  
Distinctions we esteem so grave,  
Are nothing in their sight.

They do not ask, who pined unseen,  
Who was on action hurl'd,  
Whose one bond is, that all have been  
Unspotted by the world.

There without anger thou wilt see  
Him who obeys thy spell  
No more, so he but rest, like thee,  
Unsoil'd! — and so, farewell.

Farewell! — Whether thou now liest near  
That much-loved inland sea,  
The ripples of whose blue waves cheer  
Vevey and Meillerie

And in that gracious region bland,  
Where with clear-rustling wave  
The scented pines of Switzerland  
Stand dark round thy green grave,

Between the dusty vineyard-walls  
Issuing on that green place  
The early peasant still recalls  
The pensive stranger's face,

And stoops to clear thy moss-grown date  
Ere he plods on again; —  
Or whether, by maligner fate,  
Among the swarms of men,

Where between granite terraces  
The blue Seine rolls her wave,  
The Capital of Pleasure sees  
The hardly-heard-of grave; —

Farewell! Under the sky we part,  
In the stern Alpine dell.  
O unstrung will! O broken heart!  
A last, a last farewell! 1852.

#### REQUIESCAT

STREW on her roses, roses,  
And never a spray of yew!  
In quiet she reposes;  
Ah, would that I did too!

Her mirth the world required;  
She bathed it in smiles of glee,  
But her heart was tired, tired,  
And now they let her be.



Her life was turning, turning,  
 In mazes of heat and sound.  
 But for peace her soul was yearning,  
 And now peace laps her round.

Her cabin'd, ample spirit,  
 It flutter'd and fail'd for breath.  
 To-night it doth inherit  
 The vasty hall of death. 1853.

### SOHRAB AND RUSTUM

AND the first gray of morning fill'd the  
 east,

And the fog rose out of the Oxus stream.  
 But all the Tartar camp along the stream  
 Was hush'd, and still the men were  
 plunged in sleep;

Sohrab alone, he slept not; all night long  
 He had lain wakeful, tossing on his bed;  
 But when the gray dawn stole into his  
 tent,

He rose, and clad himself, and girt his  
 sword,  
 And took his horseman's cloak, and left  
 his tent;

And went abroad into the cold wet fog,  
 Through the dim camp to Peran-Wisa's  
 tent.

Through the black Tartar tents he  
 pass'd, which stood  
 Clustering like beehives on the low flat  
 strand

Of Oxus, where the summer-floods o'er-  
 flow

When the sun melts the snows in high  
 Pamere;

Through the black tents he pass'd, o'er  
 that low strand,

And to a hillock came, a little back  
 From the stream's brink — the spot  
 where first a boat,

Crossing the stream in summer, scrapes  
 the land.

The men of former times had crown'd  
 the top

With a clay fort; but that was fall'n,  
 and now

The Tartars built there Peran-Wisa's  
 tent,

A dome of laths, and o'er it felts were  
 spread.

And Sohrab came there, and went in, and  
 stood

Upon the thick piled carpets in the tent,

And found the old man sleeping on his  
 bed

Of rugs and felts, and near him lay his  
 arms,

And Peran-Wisa heard him, though the  
 step

Was dull'd; for he slept light, an old  
 man's sleep;

And he rose quickly on one arm, and  
 said: —

“Who art thou? for it is not yet clear  
 dawn.

Speak! is there news, or any night  
 alarm?”

But Sohrab came to the bedside, and  
 said: —

“Thou know'st me, Peran-Wisa! it is I.  
 The sun is not yet risen, and the foe  
 Sleep; but I sleep not; all night long I  
 lie

Tossing and wakeful, and I come to thee.  
 For so did King Afrasiab bid me seek  
 Thy counsel, and to heed thee as thy son,  
 In Samarcand, before the army march'd;  
 And I will tell thee what my heart desires.  
 Thou know'st if, since from Ader-baijan  
 first

I came among the Tartars and bore arms,  
 I have still served Afrasiab well, and  
 shown,

At my boy's years, the courage of a man.  
 This too thou know'st, that while I still  
 bear on

The conquering Tartar ensigns through  
 the world,

And beat the Persians back on every  
 field,

I seek one man, one man, and one alone —  
 Rustum, my father; who I hoped should  
 greet,

Should one day greet, upon some well-  
 fought field,

His not unworthy, not inglorious son.  
 So I long hoped, but him I never find.

Come then, hear now, and grant me what  
 I ask.

Let the two armies rest to-day; but I  
 Will challenge forth the bravest Persian  
 lords

To meet me, man to man; if I prevail,  
 Rustum will surely hear it; if I fall —  
 Old man, the dead need no one, claim no  
 kin.

Dim is the rumor of a common fight,  
 Where host meets host, and many names  
 are sunk;

But of a single combat fame speaks clear."

He spoke; and Peran-Wisa took the hand

Of the young man in his, and sigh'd, and said:—

"O Sohrab, an unquiet heart is thine! Canst thou not rest among the Tartar chiefs,

And share the battle's common chance with us

Who love thee, but must press for ever first,

In single fight incurring single risk, To find a father thou hast never seen?

That were far best, my son, to stay with us

Unmurmuring; in our tents, while it is war,

And when 'tis truce, then in Afrasiab's towns.

But, if this one desire indeed rules all, To seek out Rustum—seek him not through fight!

Seek him in peace, and carry to his arms, O Sohrab, carry an unwounded son!

But far hence seek him, for he is not here. For now it is not as when I was young,

When Rustum was in front of every fray; But now he keeps apart, and sits at home,

In Seistan, with Zal, his father old. Whether that his own mighty strength at last

Feels the abhorr'd approaches of old age, Or in some quarrel with the Persian King.

There go!—Thou wilt not? Yet my heart forebodes

Danger or death awaits thee on this field. Fain would I know thee safe and well,

though lost

To us; fain therefore send thee hence, in peace

To seek thy father, not seek single fights In vain;—but who can keep the lion's cub

From ravening, and who govern Rustum's son?

Go, I will grant thee what thy heart desires."

So said he, and dropp'd Sohrab's hand, and left

His bed, and the warm rugs whereon he lay;

And o'er his chilly limbs his woollen coat He pass'd, and tied his sandals on his feet,

And threw a white cloak round him, and he took

In his right hand a ruler's staff, no sword; And on his head he set his sheep-skin cap, Black, glossy, curl'd, the fleece of Kara-Kul;

And raised the curtain of his tent, and call'd

His herald to his side, and went abroad. The sun by this had risen, and clear'd the fog

From the broad Oxus and the glittering sands.

And from their tents the Tartar horsemen filed

Into the open plain; so Haman bade—Haman, who next to Peran-Wisa ruled

The host, and still was in his lusty prime. From their black tents, long files of horse, they stream'd;

As when some gray November morn the files,

In marching order spread, of long-neck'd cranes

Stream over Casbin and the southern slopes

Of Elburz, from the Aralian estuaries, Or some froze Caspian reed-bed, southward bound

For the warm Persian sea-board—so they stream'd.

The Tartars of the Oxus, the King's guard, First, with black sheep-skin caps and with long spears;

Large men, large steeds; who from Bokhara come

And Khiva, and ferment the milk of mares.

Next, the more temperate Toorkmuns of the south,

The Tukas, and the lances of Salore, And those from Attruck and the Caspian sands;

Light men and on light steeds, who only drink

The acrid milk of camels, and their wells. And then a swarm of wandering horse, who came

From far, and a more doubtful service own'd;

The Tartars of Ferghana, from the banks Of the Jaxartes, men with scanty beards

And close-set skull-caps; and those wilder hordes

Who roam o'er Kipchak and the northern waste,

Kalmucks and unkempt Kuzzaks, tribes  
     who stray  
 Nearest the Pole, and wandering Kir-  
     ghizzes,  
 Who come on shaggy ponies from Pamere;  
 These all filed out from camp into the  
     plain.  
 And on the other side the Persians  
     form'd; —  
 First a light cloud of horse, Tartars they  
     seem'd,  
 The Ilyats of Khorassan; and behind,  
 The royal troops of Persia, horse and  
     foot,  
 Marshall'd battalions bright in burnish'd  
     steel.  
 But Peran-Wisa with his herald came,  
 Threading the Tartar squadrons to the  
     front,  
 And with his staff kept back the foremost  
     ranks.  
 And when Ferood, who led the Persians,  
     saw  
 That Peran-Wisa kept the Tartars back,  
 He took his spear, and to the front he  
     came,  
 And check'd his ranks, and fix'd them  
     where they stood.  
 And the old Tartar came upon the sand  
 Betwixt the silent hosts, and spake, and  
     said:  
     "Ferood, and ye, Persians and Tartars,  
     hear!  
 Let there be truce between the hosts to-  
     day.  
 But choose a champion from the Persian  
     lords  
 To fight our champion Sohrab, man to  
     man."  
 As, in the country, on a morn in June,  
 When the dew glistens on the pearly  
     ears,  
 A shiver runs through the deep corn for  
     joy —  
 So, when they heard what Peran-Wisa  
     said,  
 A thrill through all the Tartar squadrons  
     ran  
 Of pride and hope of Sohrab, whom they  
     loved.  
 But as a troop of pedlars, from Cabool,  
 Cross underneath the Indian Caucasus,  
 That vast sky-neighboring mountain of  
     milk snow;  
 Crossing so high, that, as they mount,  
     they pass

Long flocks of travelling birds dead on  
     the snow,  
 Choked by the air, and scarce can they  
     themselves  
 Slake their parch'd throats with sugar'd  
     mulberries —  
 In single file they move, and stop their  
     breath,  
 For fear they should dislodge the o'er-  
     hanging snows —  
 So the pale Persians held their breath with  
     fear.  
     And to Ferood his brother chiefs came  
     up  
 To counsel: Gudurz and Zoarrah came,  
 And Feraburz, who ruled the Persian host  
 Second, and was the uncle of the King;  
 These came and counsel'd, and then  
     Gudurz said: —  
     "Ferood, shame bids us take their  
     challenge up,  
 Yet champion have we none to match this  
     youth.  
 He has the wild stag's foot, the lion's  
     heart;  
 But Rustum came last night; aloof he  
     sits  
 And sullen, and has pitch'd his tents apart.  
 Him will I seek, and carry to his ear  
 The Tartar challenge, and this young  
     man's name.  
 Haply he will forget his wrath, and fight.  
 Stand forth the while, and take their  
     challenge up."  
     So spake he; and Ferood stood forth  
     and cried: —  
     "Old man, be it agreed as thou hast said!  
 Let Sohrab arm, and we will find a man."  
     He spake: and Peran-Wisa turn'd,  
     and strode  
 Back through the opening squadrons to  
     his tent.  
 But through the anxious Persians Gudurz  
     ran,  
 And cross'd the camp which lay behind,  
     and reach'd,  
 Out on the sands beyond it, Rustum's  
     tents.  
 Of scarlet cloth they were, and glittering  
     gay,  
 Just pitch'd; the high pavilion in the  
     midst  
 Was Rustum's, and his men lay camp'd  
     around.  
 And Gudurz enter'd Rustum's tent, and  
     found

Rustum; his morning meal was done,  
but still

The table stood before him, charged with  
food —

A side of roasted sheep, and cakes of  
bread,

And dark green melons; and there Rustum sate

Listless, and held a falcon on his wrist,  
And play'd with it; but Gudurz came  
and stood

Before him; and he look'd, and saw him  
stand,

And with a cry sprang up and dropp'd  
the bird,

And greeted Gudurz with both hands, and  
said : —

“Welcome! these eyes could see no  
better sight.

What news? but sit down first, and eat  
and drink.”

But Gudurz stood in the tent door,  
and said : —

“Not now! a time will come to eat and  
drink,

But not to-day; to-day has other needs.  
The armies are drawn out, and stand at  
gaze;

For from the Tartars is a challenge  
brought

To pick a champion from the Persian lords  
To fight their champion — and thou  
know'st his name —

Sohrab men call him, but his birth is hid.  
O Rustum, like thy might is this young  
man's!

He has the wild stag's foot, the lion's  
heart;

And he is young, and Iran's chiefs are  
old,

Or else too weak; and all eyes turned to  
thee.

Come down and help us, Rustum, or we  
lose!”

He spoke; but Rustum answer'd with  
a smile : —

“Go to! if Iran's chiefs are old, then I  
Am older; if the young are weak, the  
King

Errs strangely; for the King, for Kai  
Khosroo,

Himself is young, and honors younger  
men,

And lets the aged moulder to their graves.  
Rustum he loves no more, but loves the  
young —

The young may rise at Sohrab's vaunts,  
not I.

For what care I, though all speak Sohrab's  
fame?

For would that I myself had such a son,  
And not that one slight helpless girl I  
have —

A son so famed, so brave, to send to war,  
And I to tarry with the snow-hair'd Zal,  
My father, whom the robber Afghans vex,  
And clip his borders short, and drive his  
herds,

And he has none to guard his weak old  
age.

There would I go, and hang my armor up,  
And with my great name fence that weak  
old man,

And spend the goodly treasures I have  
got,

And rest my age, and hear of Sohrab's  
fame,

And leave to death the hosts of thankless  
kings,

And with these slaughterous hands draw  
sword no more.”

He spoke and smiled; and Gudurz  
made reply : —

“What then, O Rustum, will men say to  
this,

When Sohrab dares our bravest forth,  
and seeks

Thee most of all, and thou, whom most  
he seeks,

Hidest thy face? Take heed lest men  
should say :

*Like some old miser, Rustum hoards his  
fame,*

*And shuns to peril it with younger men.”*

And greatly moved, then Rustum made  
reply : —

“O Gudurz, wherefore dost thou say such  
words?

Thou knowest better words than this to  
say.

What is one more, one less, obscure or  
famed,

Valiant or craven, young or old, to me?  
Are not they mortal, am not I myself?

But who for men of nought would do  
great deeds?

Come, thou shalt see how Rustum hoards  
his fame!

But I will fight unknown, and in plain  
arms;

Let not men say of Rustum, he was  
match'd

In single fight with any mortal man.”  
 He spoke, and frown’d; and Gudurz  
 turn’d, and ran  
 Back quickly through the camp in fear  
 and joy —  
 Fear at his wrath, but joy that Rustum  
 came.  
 But Rustum strode to his tent-door, and  
 call’d  
 His followers in, and bade them bring his  
 arms,  
 And clad himself in steel; the arms he  
 chose  
 Were plain, and on his shield was no  
 device,  
 Only his helm was rich, inlaid with gold,  
 And, from the fluted spine atop, a plume  
 Of horsehair waved, a scarlet horsehair  
 plume.  
 So arm’d, he issued forth; and Ruksh,  
 his horse,  
 Follow’d him like a faithful hound at  
 heel —  
 Ruksh, whose renown was noised through  
 all the earth,  
 The horse, whom Rustum on a foray once  
 Did in Bokhara by the river find  
 A colt beneath its dam, and drove him  
 home,  
 And rear’d him; a bright bay, with lofty  
 crest,  
 Dight with a saddle-cloth of broider’d  
 green  
 Crusted with gold, and on the ground  
 were work’d  
 All beasts of chase, all beasts which  
 hunters know.  
 So follow’d, Rustum left his tents, and  
 cross’d  
 The camp, and to the Persian host ap-  
 pear’d.  
 And all the Persians knew him, and  
 with shouts  
 Hail’d; but the Tartars knew not who he  
 was.  
 And dear as the wet diver to the eyes  
 Of his pale wife who waits and weeps on  
 shore,  
 By sandy Bahrein, in the Persian Gulf,  
 Plunging all day in the blue waves, at  
 night,  
 Having made up his tale of precious  
 pearls,  
 Rejoins her in their hut upon the sands —  
 So dear to the pale Persians Rustum  
 came.

And Rustum to the Persian front ad-  
 vanced,  
 And Sohrab arm’d in Haman’s tent, and  
 came.  
 And as afield the reapers cut a swath  
 Down through the middle of a rich man’s  
 corn,  
 And on each side are squares of standing  
 corn,  
 And in the midst a stubble, short and  
 bare —  
 So on each side were squares of men,  
 with spears  
 Bristling, and in the midst, the open sand.  
 And Rustum came upon the sand, and  
 cast  
 His eyes toward the Tartar tents, and saw  
 Sohrab come forth, and eyed him as he  
 came.  
 As some rich woman, on a winter’s  
 morn,  
 Eyes through her silken curtains the poor  
 drudge  
 Who with numb blacken’d fingers makes  
 her fire —  
 At cock-crow, on a starlit winter’s morn,  
 When the frost flowers the whiten’d  
 window-panes —  
 And wonders how she lives, and what the  
 thoughts  
 Of that poor drudge may be; so Rustum  
 eyed  
 The unknown adventurous youth, who  
 from afar  
 Came seeking Rustum, and defying forth  
 All the most valiant chiefs; long he  
 perused  
 His spirited air, and wonder’d who he was.  
 For very young he seem’d, tenderly  
 rear’d;  
 Like some young cypress, tall, and dark,  
 and straight,  
 Which in a queen’s secluded garden  
 throws  
 Its slight dark shadow on the moonlit  
 turf,  
 By midnight, to a bubbling fountain’s  
 sound —  
 So slender Sohrab seem’d, so softly  
 rear’d.  
 And a deep pity enter’d Rustum’s soul  
 As he beheld him coming; and he stood,  
 And beckon’d to him with his hand, and  
 said : —  
 “O thou young man, the air of Heaven  
 is soft,



And warm, and pleasant; but the grave  
is cold!

Heaven's air is better than the cold dead  
grave.

Behold me! I am vast, and clad in iron,  
And tried; and I have stood on many a  
field

Of blood, and I have fought with many a  
foe —

Never was that field lost, or that foe  
saved.

O Sohrab, wherefore wilt thou rush on  
death?

Be govern'd! quit the Tartar host, and  
come

To Iran, and be as my son to me,  
And fight beneath my banner till I die!  
There are no youths in Iran brave as  
thou."

So he spake, mildly; Sohrab heard his  
voice,

The mighty voice of Rustum, and he saw  
His giant figure planted on the sand,  
Sole, like some single tower, which a  
chief

Hath builded on the waste in former  
years

Against the robbers; and he saw that  
head,

Streak'd with its first gray hairs; — hope  
filled his soul,

And he ran forward and embraced his  
knees,

And clasp'd his hand within his own, and  
said: —

"O, by the father's head! by thine own  
soul!

Art thou not Rustum? speak! art thou  
not he?"

But Rustum eyed askance the kneeling  
youth,

And turn'd away, and spake to his own  
soul: —

"Ah me, I muse what this young fox  
may mean!

False, wily, boastful, are these Tartar  
boys.

For if I now confess this thing he asks,  
And hide it not, but say: *Rustum is here!*

He will not yield indeed, nor quit our foes,  
But he will find some pretext not to fight,

And praise my fame, and proffer cour-  
teous gifts,

A belt or sword perhaps, and go his way.  
And on a feast-tide, in Afrasiab's hall,

In Samarcand, he will arise and cry:

'I challenged once, when the two armies  
camp'd

Beside the Oxus, all the Persian lords  
To cope with me in single fight; but they

Shrank, only Rustum dared; then he  
and I

Changed gifts, and went on equal terms  
away.'

So will he speak, perhaps, while men  
applaud;

Then were the chiefs of Iran shamed  
through me."

And then he turn'd, and sternly spake  
aloud: —

"Rise! wherefore dost thou vainly  
question thus

Of Rustum? I am here, whom thou hast  
call'd

By challenge forth; make good thy  
vaunt, or yield!

Is it with Rustum only thou wouldst  
fight?

Rash boy, men look on Rustum's face  
and flee!

For well I know, that did great Rustum  
stand

Before thy face this day, and were re-  
veal'd.

There would be then no talk of fighting  
more.

But being what I am, I tell thee this —  
Do thou record it in thine inmost soul:

Either thou shalt renounce thy vaunt and  
yield,

Or else thy bones shall strew this sand,  
till winds

Bleach them, or Oxus with his summer-  
floods,

Oxus in summer wash them all away."

He spoke; and Sohrab answer'd, on  
his feet: —

"Art thou so fierce? Thou wilt not  
fright me so!

I am no girl, to be made pale by words.  
Yet this thou hast said well, did Rustum

stand  
Here on this field, there were no fighting  
then.

But Rustum is far hence, and we stand  
here.

Begin! thou art more vast, more dread  
than I,

And thou art proved, I know, and I am  
young —

But yet success sways with the breath of  
Heaven.

And though thou thinkest that thou  
knowest sure

Thy victory, yet thou canst not surely  
know.

For we are all, like swimmers in the sea,  
Poised on the top of a huge wave of  
fate,

Which hangs uncertain to which side to  
fall.

And whether it will heave us up to land,  
Or whether it will roll us out to sea,

Back out to sea, to the deep waves of  
death,

We know not, and no search will make  
us know;

Only the event will teach us in its hour."

He spoke, and Rustum answer'd not,  
but hurl'd

His spear; down from the shoulder, down  
it came,

As on some partridge in the corn a hawk,  
That long has tower'd in the airy clouds,  
Drops like a plummet; Sohrab saw it  
come,

And sprang aside, quick as a flash; the  
spear

Hiss'd, and went quivering down into the  
sand,

Which it sent flying wide; — then Sohrab  
threw

In turn, and full struck Rustum's shield;  
sharp rang,

The iron plates rang sharp, but turn'd  
the spear.

And Rustum seized his club, which none  
but he

Could wield; an unlopp'd trunk it was,  
and huge,

Still rough — like those which men in  
treeless plains

To build them boats fish from the flooded  
rivers,

Hyphasis or Hydaspes, when, high up  
By their dark springs, the wind in winter-  
time

Hath made in Himalayan forests wrack,  
And strewn the channels with torn boughs  
— so huge

The club which Rustum lifted now, and  
struck

One stroke; but again Sohrab sprang  
aside,

Lithe as the glancing snake, and the club  
came

Thundering to earth, and leapt from  
Rustum's hand.

And Rustum follow'd his own blow, and  
fell

To his knees, and with his fingers clutch'd  
the sand;

And now might Sohrab have unsheathed  
his sword,

And pierced the mighty Rustum while he  
lay

Dizzy, and on his knees, and choked with  
sand;

But he look'd on, and smiled, nor bared  
his sword,

But courteously drew back, and spoke,  
and said: —

"Thou strik'st too hard! that club of  
thine will float

Upon the summer-floods, and not my  
bones.

But rise, and be not wroth! Not wroth  
am I;

No, when I see thee, wrath forsakes my  
soul.

Thou say'st, thou art not Rustum; be it  
so!

Who art thou then, that canst so touch  
my soul?

Boy as I am, I have seen battles too —  
Have waded foremost in their bloody  
waves,

And heard their hollow roar of dying men;  
But never was my heart thus touch'd  
before.

Are they from Heaven, these softening of  
the heart?

O thou old warrior, let us yield to Heaven!  
Come, plant we here in earth our angry  
spears,

And make a truce, and sit upon this sand,  
And pledge each other in red wine, like  
friends,

And thou shalt talk to me of Rustum's  
deeds.

There are enough foes in the Persian host,  
Whom I may meet, and strike, and feel  
no pang;

Champions enough Afrasiab has, whom  
thou

Mayst fight; fight *them*, when they con-  
front thy spear!

But oh, let there be peace 'twixt thee and  
me!"

He ceased, but while he spake, Rustum  
had risen,

And stood erect, trembling with rage;  
his club

He left to lie, but had regain'd his spear

Whose fiery point now in his mail'd  
right-hand

Blazed bright and baleful, like that  
autumn-star,

The baleful sign of fevers; dust had soil'd  
His stately crest, and dimm'd his glitter-  
ing arms.

His breast heaved, his lips foam'd, and  
twice his voice

Was choked with rage; at last these  
words broke way:—

“Girl! nimble with thy feet, not with  
thy hands!

Curl'd minion, dancer, coiner of sweet  
words!

Fight, let me hear thy hateful voice no  
more!

Thou art not in Afrasiab's gardens now  
With Tartar girls, with whom thou art  
wont to dance;

But on the Oxus-sands, and in the dance  
Of battle, and with me, who make no  
play

Of war; I fight it out, and hand to hand.  
Speak not to me of truce, and pledge,  
and wine!

Remember all thy valor; try thy feints  
And cunning! all the pity I had is gone;  
Because thou hast shamed me before  
both the hosts

With thy light skipping tricks, and thy  
girl's wiles.”

He spoke, and Sohrab kindled at his  
taunts,

And he too drew his sword; at once they  
rush'd

Together, as two eagles on one prey  
Come rushing down together from the  
clouds,

One from the east, one from the west;  
their shields

Dash'd with a clang together, and a din  
Rose, such as that the sinewy wood-  
cutters

Make often in the forest's heart at morn,  
Of hewing axes, crashing trees—such  
blows

Rustum and Sohrab on each other hail'd.  
And you would say that sun and star  
took part

In that unnatural conflict; for a cloud  
Grew suddenly in Heaven, and dark'd  
the sun

Over the fighters' heads; and a wind rose  
Under their feet, and moaning swept the  
plain,

And in a sandy whirlwind wrapp'd the  
pair.

In gloom they twain were wrapp'd, and  
they alone;

For both the on-looking hosts on either  
hand

Stood in broad daylight, and the sky was  
pure,

And the sun sparkled on the Oxus stream.  
But in the gloom they fought, with blood-  
shot eyes

And laboring breath; first Rustum struck  
the shield

Which Sohrab held stiff out; the steel-  
spiked spear

Rent the tough plates, but fail'd to reach  
the skin,

And Rustum pluck'd it back with angry  
groan.

Then Sohrab with his sword smote Rus-  
tum's helm,

Nor clove its steel quite through; but all  
the crest

He shore away, and that proud horse-hair  
plume,

Never till now defiled, sank to the dust;  
And Rustum bow'd his head; but then  
the gloom

Grew blacker, thunder rumbled in the air,  
And lightnings rent the cloud; and

Ruksh, the horse,  
Who stood at hand, utter'd a dreadful  
cry;—

No horse's cry was that, most like the roar  
Of some pain'd desert-lion, who all day  
Hath trail'd the hunter's javelin in his  
side,

And comes at night to die upon the sand.  
The two hosts heard that cry, and quaked  
for fear,

And Oxus curdled as it cross'd his stream.  
But Sohrab heard, and quail'd not, but  
rush'd on,

And struck again; and again Rustum  
bow'd

His head; but this time all the blade,  
like glass,

Sprang in a thousand shivers on the  
helm,

And in the hand the hilt remain'd alone.  
Then Rustum raised his head; his dread-  
ful eyes

Glared, and he shook on high his menac-  
ing spear,

And shouted: *Rustum!*—Sohrab heard  
that shout,

And shrank amazed; back he recoil'd  
 one step,  
 And scann'd with blinking eyes the ad-  
 vancing form;  
 And then he stood bewilder'd; and he  
 dropp'd  
 His covering shield, and the spear pierced  
 his side.  
 He reel'd, and staggering back, sank to  
 the ground,  
 And then the gloom dispersed, and the  
 wind fell,  
 And the bright sun broke forth, and  
 melted all  
 The cloud; and the two armies saw the  
 pair —

Saw Rustum standing, safe upon his feet,  
 And Sohrab, wounded, on the bloody  
 sand.

Then, with a bitter smile, Rustum  
 began : —

“Sohrab, thou thoughtest in thy mind  
 to kill

A Persian lord this day, and strip his  
 corpse,

And bear thy trophies to Afrasiab's tent.  
 Or else that the great Rustum would  
 come down

Himself to fight, and that thy wiles would  
 move

His heart to take a gift, and let thee go.  
 And then that all the Tartar host would  
 praise

Thy courage or thy craft, and spread thy  
 fame,

To glad thy father in his weak old age.  
 Fool, thou art slain, and by an unknown  
 man!

Dearer to the red jackals shalt thou be  
 Than to thy friends, and to thy father  
 old.”

And, with a fearless mien, Sohrab re-  
 plied : —

“Unknown thou art; yet thy fierce  
 vaunt is vain.

Thou dost not slay me, proud and boast-  
 ful man!

No! Rustum slays me, and this filial  
 heart.

For were I match'd with ten such men  
 as thee

And I were that which till to-day I was,  
 They should be lying here, I standing  
 there.

But that belovèd name unnerved my  
 arm —

That name, and something, I confess, in  
 thee,

Which troubles all my heart, and made  
 my shield

Fall; and thy spear transfix'd an unarm'd  
 foe.

And now thou boastest, and insult'st my  
 fate.

But hear thou this, fierce man, tremble  
 to hear

The mighty Rustum shall avenge my  
 death!

My father, whom I seek through all the  
 world,

He shall avenge my death, and punish  
 thee!”

As when some hunter in the spring  
 hath found

A breeding eagle sitting on her nest,  
 Upon the craggy isle of a hill-lake,

And pierced her with an arrow as she  
 rose,

And follow'd her to find her where she  
 fell

Far off; — anon her mate comes winging  
 back

From hunting, and a great way off de-  
 scribes

His huddling young left sole; at that, he  
 checks

His pinion, and with short uneasy sweeps  
 Circles above his eyry, with loud screams  
 Chiding his mate back to her nest; but  
 she

Lies dying, with the arrow in her side,  
 In some far stony gorge out of his ken,  
 A heap of fluttering feathers — never  
 more

Shall the lake glass her, flying over it;  
 Never the black and dripping precipices

Echo her stormy scream as she sails by —  
 As that poor bird flies home, nor knows his  
 loss,

So Rustum knew not his own loss, but  
 stood

Over his dying son, and knew him not.  
 But, with a cold incredulous voice, he

said : —  
 “What prate is this of fathers and re-  
 venge?

The mighty Rustum never had a son.”

And, with a failing voice, Sohrab re-  
 plied : —

“Ah yes, he had! and that lost son am I.  
 Surely the news will one day reach his  
 ear,

Reach Rustum, where he sits, and tarries  
 long,  
 Somewhere, I know not where, but far  
 from here  
 And pierce him like a stab, and make  
 him leap  
 To arms, and cry for vengeance upon  
 thee.  
 Fierce man, bethink thee, for an only  
 son!  
 What will that grief, what will that  
 vengeance be?  
 Oh, could I live, till I that grief had seen!  
 Yet him I pity not so much, but her,  
 My mother, who in Ader-baijan dwells  
 With that old king, her father, who grows  
 gray  
 With age, and rules over the valiant  
 Koords.  
 Her most I pity, who no more will see  
 Sohrab returning from the Tartar camp,  
 With spoils and honor, when the war is  
 done.  
 But a dark rumor will be bruited up,  
 From tribe to tribe, until it reach her  
 ear;  
 And then will that defenceless woman  
 learn  
 That Sohrab will rejoice her sight no  
 more,  
 But that in battle with a nameless foe,  
 By the far-distant Oxus, he is slain."  
 He spoke; and as he ceased, he wept  
 aloud,  
 Thinking of her he left, and his own  
 death.  
 He spoke; but Rustum listen'd, plunged  
 in thought.  
 Nor did he yet believe it was his son  
 Who spoke although he call'd back names  
 he knew;  
 For he had had sure tidings that the  
 babe,  
 Which was in Ader-baijan born to him,  
 Had been a puny girl, no boy at all —  
 So that sad mother sent him word, for  
 fear  
 Rustum should seek the boy, to train in  
 arms;  
 And so he deem'd that either Sohrab  
 took,  
 By a false boast, the style of Rustum's  
 son;  
 Or that men gave it him, to swell his fame.  
 So deem'd he; yet he listen'd, plunged in  
 thought

And his soul set to grief, as the vast tide  
 Of the bright rocking Ocean sets to shore  
 At the full moon; tears gather'd in his  
 eyes;  
 For he remember'd his own early youth,  
 And all its bounding rapture; as, at  
 dawn,  
 The shepherd from his mountain-lodge  
 describes  
 A far, bright city, smitten by the sun,  
 Through many rolling clouds — so Rus-  
 tum saw  
 His youth; saw Sohrab's mother, in her  
 bloom;  
 And that old king, her father, who loved  
 well  
 His wandering guest, and gave him his  
 fair child  
 With joy; and all the pleasant life they  
 led,  
 They three, in that long-distant summer-  
 time —  
 The castle, and the dewy woods, and hunt  
 And hound, and morn on those delightful  
 hills  
 In Ader-baijan. And he saw that Youth,  
 Of age and looks to be his own dear son,  
 Piteous and lovely, lying on the sand,  
 Like some rich hyacinth which by the  
 scythe  
 Of an unskilful gardener has been cut,  
 Mowing the garden grass-plots near its  
 bed,  
 And lies, a fragrant tower of purple bloom,  
 On the mown, dying grass — so Sohrab lay,  
 Lovely in death, upon the common sand.  
 And Rustum gazed on him with grief,  
 and said: —  
 "O Sohrab, thou indeed art such a son  
 Whom Rustum, wert thou his, might  
 well have loved.  
 Yet here thou errest, Sohrab, or else men  
 Have told thee false — thou art not Rus-  
 tum's son.  
 For Rustum had no son; one child he  
 had —  
 But one — a girl; who with her mother  
 now  
 Plies some light female task, nor dreams  
 of us —  
 Of us she dreams not, nor of wounds, nor  
 war."  
 But Sohrab answer'd him in wrath;  
 for now  
 The anguish of the deep-fix'd spear grew  
 fierce,



And he desired to draw forth the steel,  
And let the blood flow free, and so to die —

But first he would convince his stubborn foe;

And, rising sternly on one arm, he said : —  
“Man, who art thou who dost deny my words?

Truth sits upon the lips of dying men,  
And falsehood, while I lived, was far from mine.

I tell thee, prick'd upon this arm I bear  
That seal which Rustum to my mother gave,

That she might prick it on the babe she bore.”

He spoke; and all the blood left Rustum's cheeks,

And his knees totter'd, and he smote his hand

Against his breast, his heavy mailed hand,

That the hard iron corslet clank'd aloud;  
And to his heart he press'd the other hand,

And in a hollow voice he spake, and said : —

“Sohrab, that were a proof which could not lie!

If thou show this, then art thou Rustum's son.”

Then, with weak hasty fingers, Sohrab loosed

His belt, and near the shoulder bared his arm,

And show'd a sign in faint vermilion points

Prick'd; as a cunning workman, in Pekin,

Pricks with vermilion some clear porcelain vase,

An emperor's gift — at early morn he paints,

And all day long, and, when night comes, the lamp

Lights up his studious forehead and thin hands —

So delicately prick'd the sign appear'd  
On Sohrab's arm, the sign of Rustum's seal.

It was that griffin, which of old rear'd Zal,

Rustum's great father, whom they left to die,

A helpless babe, among the mountain-rocks;

Him that kind creature found, and rear'd, and loved —

Then Rustum took it for his glorious sign.

And Sohrab bared that image on his arm,

And himself scann'd it long with mournful eyes,

And then he touch'd it with his hand and said : —

“How say'st thou? Is that sign the proper sign

Of Rustum's son, or of some other man's?”

He spoke; but Rustum gazed, and gazed, and stood

Speechless; and then he utter'd one sharp cry :

O boy — *thy father!* — and his voice choked there.

And then a dark cloud pass'd before his eyes,

And his head swam, and he sank down to earth.

But Sohrab crawl'd to where he lay, and cast

His arms about his neck, and kiss'd his lips,

And with fond faltering fingers stroked his cheeks,

Trying to call him back to life; and life came back to Rustum, and he oped his eyes,

And they stood wide with horror; and he seized

In both his hands the dust which lay around,

And threw it on his head, and smirch'd his hair, —

His hair, and face, and beard, and glittering arms;

And strong convulsive groanings shook his breast,

And his sobs choked him; and he clutch'd his sword,

To draw it, and for ever let life out.

But Sohrab saw his thought, and held his hands,

And with a soothing voice he spake, and said : —

“Father, forbear! for I but meet to-day

The doom which at my birth was written down

In Heaven, and thou art Heaven's unconscious hand.

Surely my heart cried out that it was  
thou,  
When first I saw thee; and thy heart  
spoke too,  
I know it! but fate trod those prompt-  
ings down  
Under its iron heel; fate, fate engaged  
The strife, and hurl'd me on my father's  
spear.

But let us speak no more of this! I find  
My father; let me feel that I have found!  
Come, sit beside me on this sand, and  
take

My head betwixt thy hands, and kiss my  
cheeks,  
And wash them with thy tears, and say:  
*My son!*

Quick! quick! for number'd are my  
sands of life,  
And swift; for like the lightning to this  
field

I came, and like the wind I go away —  
Sudden, and swift, and like a passing  
wind.

But it was writ in Heaven that this should  
be."

So said he, and his voice released the  
heart  
Of Rustum, and his tears broke forth; he  
cast

His arms round his son's neck, and wept  
aloud,

And kiss'd him. And awe fell on both  
the hosts,

When they saw Rustum's grief; and  
Ruksh, the horse,

With his head bowing to the ground and  
mane

Sweeping the dust, came near, and in  
mute woe

First to the one, then to the other moved  
His head, as if inquiring what their grief  
Might mean; and from his dark, com-  
passionate eyes,

The big warm tears roll'd down, and  
caked the sand.

But Rustum chid him with stern voice,  
and said: —

"Ruksh, now thou grieve'st; but, O  
Ruksh; thy feet

Should first have rotted on their nimble  
joints,

Or ere they brought thy master to this  
field!"

But Sohrab look'd upon the horse and  
said; —

"Is this, then, Ruksh? How often, in  
past days,

My mother told me of thee, thou brave  
steed,

My terrible father's terrible horse! and  
said,

That I should one day find thy lord and  
thee.

Come, let me lay my hand upon thy  
mane!

O Ruksh, thou art more fortunate than I;  
For thou hast gone where I shall never go,  
And snuff'd the breezes of my father's  
home,

And thou hast trod the sands of Seistan,  
And seen the River of Helmund, and the  
Lake

Of Zirrah; and the aged Zal himself  
Has often stroked thy neck, and given  
thee food,

Corn in a golden platter soak'd with  
wine,

And said; *O Ruksh! bear Rustum well!*  
— but I

Have never known my grandsire's fur-  
row'd face,

Nor seen his lofty house in Seistan,  
Nor slaked my thirst at the clear Hel-  
mund stream;

But lodged among my father's foes, and  
seen

Afrasiab's cities only, Samarcand,  
Bokhara, and lone Khiva in the waste,  
And the black Toorkmun tents; and  
only drunk

The desert rivers, Moorghab and Tejend,  
Kohik, and where the Kalmuks feed  
their sheep,

The northern Sir; and this great Oxus  
stream,

The yellow Oxus, by whose brink I die."

Then, with a heavy groan, Rustum  
bewail'd —:

"Oh, that its waves were flowing over  
me!

Oh, that I saw its grains of yellow silt  
Roll tumbling in the current o'er my  
head!"

But, with a grave mild voice, Sohrab  
replied: —

"Desire not that, my father! thou must  
live.

For some are born to do great deeds, and  
live,

As some are born to be obscured, and  
die.

Do thou the deeds I die too young to do,  
And reap a second glory in thine age;  
Thou art my father, and thy gain is mine.  
But come! thou seest this great host of

men  
Which follow me; I pray thee, slay not  
these!

Let me entreat for them; what have  
they done?

They follow'd me, my hope, my fame,  
my star.

Let them all cross the Oxus back in peace.  
But me thou must bear hence, not send  
with them,

But carry me with thee to Seistan,  
And place me on a bed, and mourn for  
me,

Thou, and the snow-hair'd Zal, and all  
thy friends.

And thou must lay me in that lovely  
earth,

And heap a stately mound above my  
bones,

And plant a far-seen pillar over all.  
That so the passing horseman on the waste  
May see my tomb a great way off, and  
cry:

*Sohrab, the mighty Rustum's son, lies there,  
Whom his great father did in ignorance kill!*  
And I be not forgotten in my grave."

And, with a mournful voice, Rustum  
replied:—

"Fear not! as thou hast said, Sohrab,  
my son,

So shall it be; for I will burn my tents,  
And quit the host, and bear thee hence  
with me,

And carry thee away to Seistan,  
And place thee on a bed, and mourn for  
thee,

With the snow-headed Zal, and all my  
friends,

And I will lay thee in that lovely earth,  
And heap a stately mound above thy  
bones,

And plant a far-seen pillar over all,  
And men shall not forget thee in thy  
grave.

And I will spare thy host; yea, let them  
go!

Let them all cross the Oxus back in  
peace!

What should I do with slaying any more?  
For would that all that I have ever slain  
Might be once more alive; my bitterest  
foes,

And they who were call'd champions in  
their time,

And through whose death I won that  
fame I have —

And I were nothing but a common man,  
A poor, mean soldier, and without re-  
nown,

So thou mightest live too, my son, my  
son!

Or rather would that I, even I myself,  
Might now be lying on this bloody sand,  
Near death, and by an ignorant stroke of  
thine,

Not thou of mine! and I might die, not  
thou;

And I, not thou, be borne to Seistan;  
And Zal might weep above my grave, not  
thine;

And say: *O son, I weep thee not too sore,  
For willingly, I know, thou mel'st thine  
end!*

But now in blood and battles was my  
youth,

And full of blood and battles is my age,  
And I shall never end this life of blood."

Then, at the point of death, Sohrab  
replied:—

"A life of blood indeed, thou dreadful  
man!

But thou shalt yet have peace; only not  
now,

Not yet! but thou shalt have it on that  
day,

When thou shalt sail in a high-masted  
ship,

Thou and the other peers of Kai Khosroo,  
Returning home over the salt blue sea,  
From laying thy dear master in his  
grave."

And Rustum gazed in Sohrab's face,  
and said:—

"Soon be that day, my son, and deep that  
sea!

Till then, if fate so wills, let me endure."

He spoke; and Sohrab smiled on him,  
and took

The spear, and drew it from his side, and  
eased

His wound's imperious anguish; but the  
blood

Came welling from the open gash, and  
life

Flow'd with the stream;—all down his  
cold white side

The crimson torrent ran, dim now and  
soil'd,

Like the soil'd tissue of white violets  
 Left, freshly gather'd, on the native bank,  
 By children whom their nurses call with  
     haste  
 Indoors from the sun's eye; his head  
 droop'd low,  
 His limbs grew slack; motionless, white,  
     he lay —  
 White, with eyes closed; only when  
     heavy gasps,  
 Deep heavy gasps quivering through all  
     his frame,  
 Convulsed him back to life, he open'd  
     them,  
 And fix'd them feebly on his father's face;  
 Till now all strength was ebb'd, and  
     from his limbs,  
 Unwillingly the spirit fled away,  
 Regretting the warm mansion which it  
     left,  
 And youth, and bloom, and this delightful  
     world.  
     So, on the bloody sand, Sohrab lay  
     dead;  
 And the great Rustum drew his horse-  
     man's cloak  
 Down o'er his face, and sate by his dead  
     son.  
 As those black granite pillars, once high-  
     rear'd  
 By Jemshid in Persepolis, to bear  
 His house, now 'mid their broken flights  
     of steps  
 Lie prone, enormous, down the mountain  
     side —  
 So in the sand lay Rustum by his son.  
     And night came down over the solemn  
     waste,  
 And the two gazing hosts, and that sole  
     pair,  
 And darken'd all; and a cold fog, with  
     night,  
 Crept from the Oxus. Soon a hum arose,  
 As of a great assembly loosed, and fires  
 Began to twinkle through the fog; for  
     now  
 Both armies moved to camp, and took  
     their meal;  
 The Persians took it on the open sands  
 Southward, the Tartars by the river  
     marge;  
 And Rustum and his son were left alone.  
     But the majestic river floated on,  
 Out of the mist and hum of that low  
     land,  
 Into the frosty starlight, and there moved,

Rejoicing, through the hush'd Choras-  
     mian waste,  
 Under the solitary moon; — he flow'd  
 Right for the polar star, past Orgunjè,  
 Brimming, and bright, and large; then  
     sands began  
 To hem his watery march, and dam his  
     streams,  
 And split his currents; that for many a  
     league  
 The shorn and parcell'd Oxus strains  
     along  
 Through beds of sand and matted rushy  
     isles —  
 Oxus, forgetting the bright speed he had  
 In his high mountain-cradle in Pamere,  
 A foil'd circuitous wanderer — till at last  
 The long'd-for dash of waves is heard, and  
     wide  
 His luminous home of waters opens,  
     bright  
 And tranquil, from whose floor the new-  
     bathed stars  
 Emerge, and shine upon the Aral Sea.  
                                                             1853.

## PHILOMELA

HARK! ah, the nightingale —  
 The tawny-throated!  
 Hark, from that moonlit cedar what a  
     burst!  
 What triumph! hark! — what pain!

O wanderer from a Grecian shore,  
 Still, after many years, in distant lands,  
 Still nourishing in thy bewilder'd brain  
 That wild, unquench'd, deep-sunken,  
     old-world pain —  
 Say, will it never heal?  
 And can this fragrant lawn  
 With its cool trees, and night,  
 And the sweet, tranquil Thames,  
 And moonshine, and the dew,  
 To thy rack'd heart and brain  
 Afford no balm?

Dost thou to-night behold,  
 Here, through the moonlight on this  
     English grass,  
 The unfriendly palace in the Thracian  
     wild?  
 Dost thou again peruse  
 With hot cheeks and sear'd eyes  
 The too clear web, and thy dumb sister's  
     shame?

Dost thou once more assay  
 Thy flight, and feel come over thee,  
 Poor fugitive, the feathery change  
 Once more, and once more seem to make  
     resound  
 With love and hate, triumph and agony,  
 Lone Daulis, and the high Cephissian  
     vale?  
 Listen, Eugenia —  
 How thick the bursts come crowding  
     through the leaves!  
 Again — thou hearest?  
 Eternal passion!  
 Eternal pain!

1853.

## THE SCHOLAR-GIPSY

Go, for they call you, shepherd, from the  
     hill;  
 Go, shepherd, and untie the wattled cotes!  
     No longer leave thy wistful flock unfed,  
 Nor let thy bawling fellows rack their  
     throats,  
 Nor the cropp'd herbage shoot another  
     head.  
 But when the fields are still,  
 And the tired men and dogs all gone to  
     rest,  
 And only the white sheep are some-  
     times seen  
 Cross and recross the strips of moon-  
     blanch'd green,  
 Come, shepherd, and again begin the  
     quest!

Here, where the reaper was at work of  
     late —  
 In this high field's dark corner, where he  
     leaves  
 His coat, his basket, and his earthen  
     cruse,  
 And in the sun all morning binds the  
     sheaves,  
 Then here, at noon, comes back his  
     stores to use —  
 Here will I sit and wait,  
 While to my ear from uplands far away  
 The bleating of the folded flocks is  
     borne.  
 With distant cries of reapers in the  
     corn —  
 All the live murmur of a summer's day.  
 Screen'd is this nook o'er the high, half-  
     reap'd field,

And here till sun-down, shepherd! will I  
     be.  
 Through the thick corn the scarlet  
     poppies peep,  
 And round green roots and yellowing  
     stalks I see  
 Pale pink convolvulus in tendrils creep;  
 And air-swept lindens yield  
 Their scent, and rustle down their per-  
     fumed showers  
 Of bloom on the bent grass where I am  
     laid,  
 And bower me from the August sun  
     with shade;  
 And the eye travels down to Oxford's  
     towers.

And near me on the grass lies Glanvil's  
     book —  
 Come, let me read the oft-read tale  
     again!  
 The story of the Oxford scholar poor,  
 Of pregnant parts and quick inventive  
     brain,  
 Who, tired of knocking at prefer-  
     ment's door,  
 One summer-morn forsook  
 His friends, and went to learn the gipsy-  
     lore,  
 And roam'd the world with that wild  
     brotherhood,  
 And came, as most men deem'd, to little  
     good.  
 But came to Oxford and his friends no  
     more.

But once, years after, in the country-  
     lanes,  
 Two scholars, whom at college erst he  
     knew,  
 Met him, and of his way of life en-  
     quired;  
 Whereat he answer'd, that the gipsy-  
     crew,  
 His mates, had arts to rule as they de-  
     sired  
 The workings of men's brains,  
 And they can bind them to what thoughts  
     they will.  
 "And I," he said, "the secret of their  
     art,  
 When fully learn'd, will to the world  
     impart;  
 But it needs heaven-sent moments for  
     this skill."



This said, he left them, and return'd no more. —

But rumors hung about the country-side,  
That the lost Scholar long was seen to stray,

Seen by rare glimpses, pensive and tongue-tied,

In hat of antique shape, and cloak of gray,

The same the gipsies wore.

Shepherds had met him on the Hurst in spring;

At some lone alehouse in the Berkshire moors,

On the warm ingle-bench, the smock-frock'd boors

Had found him seated at their entering,

But, 'mid their drink and clatter, he would fly.

And I myself seem half to know thy looks,

And put the shepherds, wanderer! on thy trace;

And boys who in lone wheatfields scare the rooks

I ask if thou hast pass'd their quiet place;

Or in my boat I lie

Moor'd to the cool bank in the summer-heats,

'Mid wide grass meadows which the sunshine fills,

And watch the warm, green-muffled Cumner hills,

And wonder if thou haunt'st their shy retreats.

For most, I know, thou lov'st retired ground!

Thee at the ferry Oxford riders blithe,  
Returning home on summer-nights,

have met

Crossing the stripling Thames at Bablock-hithe,

Trailing in the cool stream thy fingers wet,

As the punt's rope chops round;

And leaning backward in a pensive dream,

And fostering in thy lap a heap of flowers

Pluck'd in shy fields and distant Wychwood bowers,

And thine eyes resting on the moonlit stream.

And then they land, and thou art seen no more! —

Maidens, who from the distant hamlets come

To dance around the Fyfield elm in May,

Oft through the darkening fields have seen thee roam,

Or cross a stile into the public way.

Oft thou hast given them store  
Of flowers — the frail-leaf'd, white anemone,

Dark bluebells drench'd with dews of summer eves,

And purple orchises with spotted leaves —

But none hath words she can report of thee.

And, above Godstow Bridge, when hay time's here

In June, and many a scythe in sunshine flames,

Men who through those wide fields of breezy grass

Where black-wing'd swallows haunt the glittering Thames,

To bathe in the abandon'd lasher pass,

Have often pass'd thee near

Sitting upon the river bank o'ergrown;  
Mark'd thine outlandish garb, thy figure spare,

Thy dark vague eyes, and soft abstracted air —

But, when they came from bathing, thou wast gone!

At some lone homestead in the Cumner hills,

Where at her open door the housewife darns,

Thou hast been seen, or hanging on a gate

To watch the threshers in the mossy barns.

Children, who early range these slopes and late

For cresses from the rills,

Have known thee eying, all an April-day,  
The springing pastures and the feeding kine;

And mark'd thee, when the stars come out and shine,

Through the long dewy grass move slow away.

In autumn, on the skirts of Bagley  
Wood —

Where most the gipsies by the turf-edged  
way

Pitch their smoked tents, and every  
bush you see

With scarlet patches tagg'd and shreds  
of gray,

Above the forest-ground called Thes-  
saly —

The blackbird, picking food,  
Sees thee, nor stops his meal, nor fears  
at all;

So often has he known thee past him  
stray,

Rapt, twirling in thy hand a wither'd  
spray, [to fall.  
And waiting for the spark from heaven

And once, in winter, on the causeway chill  
Where home through flooded fields foot-  
travellers go,

Have I not pass'd thee on the wooden  
bridge,

Wrapt in thy cloak and battling with the  
snow,

Thy face tow'rd Hinksey and its win-  
try ridge?

And thou hast climb'd the hill,  
And gain'd the white brow of the Cumner  
range;

Turn'd once to watch, while thick the  
snowflakes fall,

The line of festal light in Christ-church  
hall —

Then sought thy straw in some seques-  
ter'd grange.

But what — I dream! Two hundred  
years are flown

Since first thy story ran through Oxford  
halls,

And the grave Glanvil did the tale in-  
scribe

That thou wert wander'd from the stu-  
dious walls

To learn strange arts, and join a gipsy-  
tribe;

And thou from earth art gone

Long since, and in some quiet churchyard  
laid —

Some country-nook, where o'er thy un-  
known grave

Tall grasses and white flowering nettles  
wave, [shade,

Under a dark, red-fruited yew-tree's

— No, no, thou hast not felt the lapse of  
hours!

For what wears out the life of mortal men?  
'Tis that from change to change their  
being rolls;

'Tis that repeated shocks, again, again,  
Exhaust the energy of strongest souls  
And numb the elastic powers.

Till having used our nerves with bliss  
and teen,

And tired upon a thousand schemes  
our wit,

To the just-pausing Genius we remit  
Our worn-out life, and are — what we  
have been.

Thou hast not lived, why should'st thou  
perish, so?

Thou hadst *one* aim, *one* business, *one*  
desire;

Else wert thou long since number'd  
with the dead!

Else hadst thou spent, like other men,  
thy fire!

The generations of thy peers are fled,  
And we ourselves shall go;

But thou possessest an immortal lot,  
And we imagine thee exempt from age

And living as thou liv'st on Glanvil's  
page,

Because thou hadst — what we, alas!  
have not.

For early didst thou leave the world,  
with powers

Fresh, undiverted to the world without,  
Firm to their mark, not spent on other  
things;

Free from the sick fatigue, the languid  
doubt,

Which much to have tried, in much  
been baffled, brings.

O life unlike to ours!

Who fluctuate idly without term or scope,  
Of whom each strives, nor knows for  
what he strives,

And each half lives a hundred different  
lives;

Who wait like thee, but not, like thee, in  
hope.

Thou waitest for the spark from heaven!  
and we,

Light half-believers of our casual creeds,  
Who never deeply felt, nor clearly  
will'd,

Whose insight never has borne fruit in  
deeds,

Whose vague resolves never have been  
fulfill'd;

For whom each year we see  
Breeds new beginnings, disappointments  
new;

Who hesitate and falter life away,  
And lose to-morrow the ground won  
to-day —

Ah! do not we, wanderer! await it too?

Yes, we await it! — but it still delays,  
And then we suffer! and amongst us one,

Who most has suffer'd, takes dejectedly  
His seat upon the intellectual throne;

And all his store of sad experience he  
Lays bare of wretched days;

Tells us his misery's birth and growth  
and signs,

And how the dying spark of hope was  
fed,

And how the breast was soothed, and  
how the head,

And all his hourly varied anodynes.

This for our wisest! and we others pine,  
And wish the long unhappy dream would  
end,

And waive all claim to bliss, and try to  
bear;

With close-lipp'd patience for our only  
friend,

Sad patience, too near neighbor to  
despair —

But none has hope like thine!

Thou through the fields and through the  
woods dost stray,

Roaming the country-side, a truant  
boy,

Nursing thy project in unclouded joy,  
And every doubt long blown by time  
away.

O born in days when wits were fresh and  
clear,

And life ran gaily as the sparkling  
Thames;

Before the strange disease of modern  
life,

With its sick hurry, its divided aims,  
Its heads o'ertax'd, its palsied hearts,

was rife —

Fly hence, our contact fear!

Still fly, plunge deeper in the bowering  
wood!

Averse, as Dido did with gesture stern  
From her false friend's approach in

Hades turn,

Wave us away and keep thy solitude!

Still nursing the unconquerable hope,  
Still clutching the inviolable shade,

With a free onward impulse brushing  
through,

By night, the silver'd branches of the  
glade —

Far on the forest-skirts, where none  
pursue,

On some mild pastoral slope

Emerge, and resting on the moonlit pales

Freshen thy flowers as in former years

With dew, or listen with enchanted  
ears,

From the dark dingles, to the nightin-  
gales!

But fly our paths, our feverish contact  
fly!

For strong the infection of our mental  
strife,

Which, though it gives no bliss, yet  
spoils for rest;

And we should win thee from thy own  
fair life,

Like us distracted, and like us unblest.

Soon, soon thy cheer would die,

Thy hopes grow timorous, and unfix'd  
thy powers,

And thy clear aims be cross and shifting  
made;

And then thy glad perennial youth  
would fade,

Fade and grow old at last, and die like  
ours.

Then fly our greetings, fly our speech and  
smiles!

— As some grave Tyrian trader, from the  
sea,

Descried at sunrise an emerging prow

Lifting the cool-hair'd creepers stealthily,

The fringes of a southward-facing  
brow

Among the Ægæan Isles;

And saw the merry Grecian coaster come,

Freighted with amber grapes, and  
Chian wine,

Green, bursting figs, and tunnies  
steep'd in brine —

And knew the intruders on his ancient  
home,

The young light-hearted masters of the waves —

And snatch'd his rudder, and shook out more sail;

And day and night held on indignantly  
O'er the Blue Midland waters with the gale,

    Betwixt the Syrtes and soft Sicily,

    To where the Atlantic raves

Outside the western straits; and unbent sails

    There, where down cloudy cliffs,  
    through sheets of foam,

    Shy traffickers, the dark Iberians  
    come;

And on the beach undid his corded bales.  
1853.

## FROM BALDER DEAD

### SECTION III

THE Gods held talk together, group'd in knots,

Round Balder's corpse, which they had thither borne;

And Hermod came down tow'ards them from the gate.

And Lok, the father of the serpent, first  
Beheld him come, and to his neighbor spake: —

    "See, here is Hermod, who comes single  
    back

From Hell; and shall I tell thee how he seems?

Like as a farmer, who hath lost his dog,  
Some morn, at market, in a crowded town —

Through many streets the poor beast runs in vain,

And follows this man after that, for hours;  
And, late at evening, spent and panting,  
falls

Before a stranger's threshold, not his home,

With flanks a-tremble, and his slender tongue

Hangs quivering out between his dust-smear'd jaws,

And piteously he eyes the passers by;

But home his master comes to his own farm,

Far in the country, wondering where he is —

So Hermod comes to-day unfollow'd home."

And straight his neighbor, moved with wrath, replied: —

"Deceiver! fair in form, but false in heart!

Enemy, mocker, whom, though Gods, we hate —

Peace, lest our father Odin hear thee gibe!

Would I might see him snatch thee in his hand,

And bind thy carcase, like a bale, with cords,

And hurl thee in a lake, to sink or swim!

If clear from plotting Balder's death, to swim;

But deep, if thou devisedst it, to drown,  
And perish, against fate, before thy day."

But Odin look'd toward the land, and saw  
His messenger; and he stood forth, and cried.

And Hermod came, and leapt from Sleipner down,

And in his father's hand put Sleipner's rein,

And greeted Odin and the Gods, and said: —

    "Odin, my father, and ye, Gods of Heaven!

Lo, home, having perform'd your will, I come.

Into the joyless kingdom have I been,  
Below, and look'd upon the shadowy tribes

Of ghosts, and communed with their solemn queen;

And to your prayer she sends you this reply:

*Show her through all the world the signs of grief!*

*Fails but one thing to grieve, there Balder stops!*

*Let Gods, men, brutes, beweeep him; plants and stones:*

*So shall she know your loss was dear indeed,*

*And bend her heart and give you Balder back."*

He spoke; and all the Gods to Odin look'd:

And straight the Father of the ages said: —

    "Ye Gods, these terms may keep another day.

But now, put on your arms, and mount your steeds,

And in procession all come near, and weep

Balder; for that is what the dead desire.  
When ye enough have wept, then build a pile

Of the heap'd wood, and burn his corpse with fire

Out of our sight; that we may turn from grief,

And lead, as erst, our daily life in Heaven."

He spoke, and the Gods arm'd; and Odin donn'd

His dazzling corslet and his helm of gold,  
And led the way on Sleipner; and the rest

Follow'd, in tears, their father and their king.

And thrice in arms around the dead they rode,

Weeping; the sands were wetted, and their arms,

With their thick-falling tears — so good a friend

They mourn'd that day, so bright, so loved a God.

And Odin came, and laid his kingly hands

On Balder's breast, and thus began the wail: —

"Farewell, O Balder, bright and loved, my son!

In that great day, the twilight of the Gods,

When Muspel's children shall beleague Heaven,

Then we shall miss thy counsel and thy arm."

Thou camest near the next, O warrior Thor!

Shouldering thy hammer, in thy chariot drawn,

Swaying the long-hair'd goats with silver'd rein;

And over Balder's corpse these words didst say: —

"Brother, thou dwellest in the darksome land,

And talkest with the feeble tribes of ghosts,

Now, and I know not how they prize thee there —

But here, I know, thou wilt be miss'd and mourn'd

For haughty spirits and high wraths are rife

Among the Gods and Heroes here in Heaven,

As among those whose joy and work is war;

And daily strifes arise, and angry words.

But from thy lips, O Balder, night or day,

Heard no one ever an injurious word

To God or Hero, but thou keptest back

The others, laboring to compose their brawls.

Be ye then kind, as Balder too was kind!

For we lose him, who smoothed all strife in Heaven."

He spake, and all the Gods assenting wail'd.

And Freya next came nigh, with golden tears;

The loveliest Goddess she in Heaven, by all

Most honor'd after Freya, Odin's wife.

Her long ago the wandering Oder took

To mate, but left her to roam distant lands;

Since then she seeks him, and weeps tears of gold.

Names hath she many; Vanadis on earth

They call her, Freya is her name in Heaven;

She in her hands took Balder's head, and spake: —

"Balder, my brother, thou art gone a road

Unknown and long, and haply on that way

My long-lost wandering Oder thou hast met,

For in the paths of Heaven he is not found.

Oh, if it be so, tell him what thou wast

To his neglected wife, and what he is,

And wring his heart with shame, to hear thy word!

For he, my husband, left me here to pine,

Not long a wife, when his unquiet heart

First drove him from me into distant lands;

Since then I vainly seek him through the world,

And weep from shore to shore my golden tears,

But neither god nor mortal heeds my pain.

Thou only, Balder, wast for ever kind,

To take my hand, and wipe my tears, and say:

*Weep not, O Freya, weep no golden tears!*

*One day the wandering Oder will return!*



*Or thou wilt find him in thy faithful search  
On some great road, or resting in an inn,  
Or at a ford, or sleeping by a tree.*

So Balder said; — but Oder, well I know,  
My truant Oder I shall see no more  
To the world's end; and Balder now is  
gone.

And I am left uncomforted in Heaven.”  
She spake; and all the Goddesses be-  
wail'd.

Last from among the Heroes one came  
near,

No God, but of the hero-troop the chief —  
Regner, who swept the northern sea with  
fleets,

And ruled o'er Denmark and the heathy  
isles,

Living; but Ella captured him and  
slew; —

A king whose fame then fill'd the vast of  
Heaven.

Now time obscures it, and men's later  
deeds.

He last approach'd the corpse, and spake,  
and said: —

“Balder, there yet are many Scalds in  
Heaven

Still left, and that chief Scald, thy  
brother Brage,

Whom we may bid to sing, though thou  
art gone.

And all these gladly, while we drink, we  
hear,

After the feast is done, in Odin's hall;  
But they harp ever on one string, and  
wake

Remembrance in our soul of wars alone,  
Such as on earth we valiantly have waged,  
And blood, and ringing blows, and violent  
death.

But when thou sangest, Balder, thou didst  
strike

Another note, and, like a bird in spring,  
Thy voice of joyance minded us, and  
youth,

And wife, and children, and our ancient  
home.

Yes, and I, too, remember'd then no more  
My dungeon, where the serpents stung me  
dead,

Nor Ella's victory on the English coast —  
But I heard Thora laugh in Gothland  
Isle,

And saw my shepherdess Aslauga, tend  
Her flock along the white Norwegian  
beach.

Tears started to mine eyes with yearning  
joy,

Therefore with grateful heart I mourn  
thee dead.”

So Regner spake, and all the Heroes  
groan'd.

But now the sun had pass'd the height of  
Heaven,

And soon had all that day been spent in  
wail;

But then the Father of the ages said: —  
“Ye Gods, there well may be too much  
of wail!

Bring now the gather'd wood to Balder's  
ship;

Heap on the deck the logs, and build the  
pyre.”

But when the Gods and Heroes heard,  
they brought

The wood to Balder's ship, and built a  
pile,

Full the deck's breadth, and lofty; then  
the corpse

Of Balder on the highest top they laid,  
With Nanna on his right, and on his left  
Hoder, his brother, whom his own hand  
slew.

And they set jars of wine and oil to lean  
Against the bodies, and stuck torches  
near,

Splinters of pine-wood, soak'd with tur-  
pentine;

And brought his arms and gold, and all his  
stuff,

And slew the dogs who at his table fed,  
And his horse, Balder's horse, whom  
most he loved,

And placed them on the pyre, and Odin  
threw

A last choice gift thereon, his golden ring.  
The mast they fixed, and hoisted up the  
sails,

Then they put fire to the wood; and  
Thor

Set his stout shoulder hard against the  
stern

To push the ship through the thick sand;  
sparks flew

From the deep trench she plough'd, so  
strong a God

Furrow'd it; and the water gurgled in.  
And the ship floated on the waves, and  
rock'd.

But in the hills a strong east-wind arose,  
And came down moaning to the sea; first  
squalls

Ran black o'er the sea's face, then steady  
 rush'd  
 The breeze, and fill'd the sails, and blew  
 the fire.  
 And wreathed in smoke the ship stood out  
 to sea.  
 Soon with a roaring rose the mighty fire,  
 And the pile crackled; and between the  
 logs  
 Sharp quivering tongues of flame shot out,  
 and leaped,  
 Curling and darting, higher, until they  
 lick'd  
 The summit of the pile, the dead, the  
 mast,  
 And ate the shrivelling sails; but still the  
 ship  
 Drove on, ablaze above her hull with  
 fire.  
 And the Gods stood upon the beach, and  
 gazed.  
 And while they gazed, the sun went  
 lurid down  
 Into the smoke-wrapt sea, and night  
 came on.  
 Then the wind fell, with night, and there  
 was calm;  
 But through the dark they watch'd the  
 burning ship  
 Still carried o'er the distant waters on,  
 Farther and farther, like an eye of fire.  
 And long, in the far dark, blazed Balder's  
 pile;  
 But fainter, as the stars rose high, it  
 flared,  
 The bodies were consumed, ash choked  
 the pile.  
 And as, in a decaying winter-fire,  
 A charr'd log, falling, makes a shower  
 of sparks —  
 So with a shower of sparks the pile fell in,  
 Reddening the sea around; and all was  
 dark.  
 But the Gods went by starlight up the  
 shore  
 To Asgard, and sate down in Odin's hall  
 At table, and the funeral-feast began.  
 All night they ate the boar Serimner's  
 flesh,  
 And from their horns, with silver rimm'd,  
 drank mead,  
 Silent, and waited for the sacred morn.  
 And morning over all the world was  
 spread.  
 Then from their loathèd feasts the Gods  
 arose,

And took their horses, and set forth to  
 ride  
 O'er the bridge Bifrost, where is Heim-  
 dall's watch,  
 To the ash Igdrasil, and Ida's plain;  
 Thor came on foot, the rest on horse-  
 back rode.  
 And they found Mimir sitting by his  
 fount  
 Of wisdom, which beneath the ashtree  
 springs;  
 And saw the Nornies watering the roots  
 Of that world-shadowing tree with  
 honey-dew.  
 There came the Gods, and sate them down  
 on stones;  
 And thus the Father of the ages said: —  
 "Ye Gods, the terms ye know, which  
 Hermod brought.  
 Accept them or reject them! both have  
 grounds.  
 Accept them, and they bind us, unful-  
 fill'd,  
 To leave for ever Balder in the grave,  
 An unrecover'd prisoner, shade with  
 shades.  
 But how, ye say, should the fulfilment  
 fail? —  
 Smooth sound the terms, and light to be  
 fulfill'd;  
 For dear-beloved was Balder while he  
 lived  
 In Heaven and earth, and who would  
 grudge him tears?  
 But from the traitorous seed of Lok  
 they come,  
 These terms, and I suspect some hidden  
 fraud.  
 Bethink ye, Gods, is there no other  
 way? —  
 Speak, were not this a way, the way for  
 Gods?  
 If I, if Odin, clad in radiant arms,  
 Mounted on Sleipner, with the warrior  
 Thor  
 Drawn in his car beside me, and my sons,  
 All the strong brood of Heaven, to swell  
 my train,  
 Should make irruption into Hela's realm,  
 And set the fields of gloom ablaze with  
 light,  
 And bring in triumph Balder back to  
 Heaven?"  
 He spake, and his fierce sons applauded  
 loud.  
 But Frea, mother of the Gods, arose,

Daughter and wife of Odin; thus she  
 said: —  
 "Odin, thou whirlwind, what a threat  
 is this!  
 Thou threatenest what transcends thy  
 might, even thine.  
 For of all powers the mightiest far art  
 thou,  
 Lord over men on earth, and Gods in  
 Heaven;  
 Yet even from thee thyself hath been  
 withheld  
 One thing — to undo what thou thyself  
 hast ruled.  
 For all which hath been fixt, was fixt by  
 thee.  
 In the beginning, ere the Gods were born,  
 Before the Heavens were builded, thou  
 didst slay  
 The giant Ymir, whom the abyss brought  
 forth,  
 Thou and thy brethren fierce, the sons  
 of Bor,  
 And cast his trunk to choke the abysmal  
 void.  
 But of his flesh and members thou didst  
 build  
 The earth and Ocean, and above them  
 Heaven.  
 And from the flaming world, where  
 Muspel reigns,  
 Thou sent'st and fetched'st fire, and  
 madest lights,  
 Sun, moon, and stars, which thou hast  
 hung in Heaven,  
 Dividing clear the paths of night and  
 day.  
 And Asgard thou didst build, and Mid-  
 gard fort;  
 Then me thou mad'st; of us the Gods  
 were born.  
 Last, walking by the sea, thou foundest  
 spars  
 Of wood, and framed'st men, who till the  
 earth,  
 Or on the sea, the field of pirates, sail.  
 And all the race of Ymir thou didst  
 drown,  
 Save one, Bergelmer; — he on shipboard  
 fled  
 Thy deluge, and from him the giants  
 sprang.  
 But all that brood thou hast removed far  
 off,  
 And set by Ocean's utmost marge to  
 dwell;

But Hela into Nifheim thou threw'st,  
 And gav'st her nine unlighted worlds to  
 rule,  
 A queen, and empire over all the dead.  
 That empire wilt thou now invade, light  
 up  
 Her darkness, from her grasp a subject  
 tear? —  
 Try it; but I, for one, will not applaud.  
 Nor do I merit, Odin, thou should'st slight  
 Me and my words, though thou be first in  
 Heaven;  
 For I too am a Goddess, born of thee,  
 Thine eldest, and of me the Gods are  
 sprung;  
 And all that is to come I know, but lock  
 In mine own breast, and have to none  
 reveal'd.  
 Come then! since Hela holds by right her  
 prey,  
 But offers terms for his release to  
 Heaven,  
 Accept the chance; thou canst no more  
 obtain.  
 Send through the world thy messengers;  
 entreat  
 All living and unliving things to weep  
 For Balder; if thou haply thus may'st  
 melt  
 Hela, and win the loved one back to  
 Heaven."  
 She spake, and on her face let fall her  
 veil,  
 And bow'd her head, and sate with folded  
 hands.  
 Nor did the all-ruling Odin slight her  
 word;  
 Straightway he spake, and thus ad-  
 dress'd the Gods:  
 "Go quickly forth through all the  
 world, and pray  
 All living and unliving things to weep  
 Balder, if haply he may thus be won."  
 When the Gods heard, they straight  
 arose, and took  
 Their horses, and rode forth through all  
 the world;  
 North, south, east, west, they struck,  
 and roam'd the world  
 Entreating all things to weep Balder's  
 death.  
 And all that lived, and all without life,  
 wept.  
 And as in winter, when the frost breaks  
 up,  
 At winter's end, before the spring begins,

And a warm west-wind blows, and thaw  
 sets in —  
 After an hour a dripping sound is heard  
 In all the forests, and the soft-strewn  
 snow  
 Under the trees is dibbled thick with  
 holes,  
 And from the boughs the snowloads  
 shuffle down;  
 And, in fields sloping to the south, dark  
 plots  
 Of grass peep out amid surrounding  
 snow,  
 And widen, and the peasant's heart is  
 glad —  
 So through the world was heard a drip-  
 ping noise  
 Of all things weeping to bring Balder  
 back;  
 And there fell joy upon the Gods to hear.  
 But Hermod rode with Niord, whom he  
 took  
 To show him spits and beaches of the sea  
 Far off, where some unwarn'd might fail  
 to weep —  
 Niord, the God of storms, whom fishers  
 know;  
 Not born in Heaven; he was in Vanheim  
 rear'd,  
 With men, but lives a hostage with the  
 Gods;  
 He knows each frith, and every rocky  
 creek  
 Fringed with dark pines, and sands where  
 seafowl scream —  
 They two scour'd every coast, and all  
 things wept.  
 And they rode home together, through  
 the wood  
 Of Jarnvid, which to east of Midgard lies  
 Bordering the giants, where the trees are  
 iron;  
 There in the wood before a cave they  
 came.  
 Where sate, in the cave's mouth, a skinny  
 hag,  
 Toothless and old; she gibes the passers  
 by.  
 Thok is she call'd, but now Lok wore her  
 shape;  
 She greeted them the first, and laugh'd,  
 and said: —  
 "Ye Gods, good lack, is it so dull in  
 Heaven,  
 That ye come pleasuring to Thok's iron  
 wood?

Lovers of change ye are, fastidious sprites.  
 Look, as in some boor's yard a sweet-  
 breath'd cow,  
 Whose manger is stuff'd full of good fresh  
 hay,  
 Snuffs at it daintily, and stoops her head  
 To chew the straw, her litter, at her  
 feet —  
 So ye grow squeamish, Gods, and sniff  
 at Heaven!"  
 She spake; but Hermod answer'd her  
 and said: —  
 "Thok, not for gibes we come, we come  
 for tears.  
 Balder is dead, and Hela holds her prey,  
 But will restore, if all things give him  
 tears.  
 Begrudge not thine! to all was Balder  
 dear."  
 Then, with a louder laugh, the hag  
 replied: —  
 "Is Balder dead? and do ye come for  
 tears?  
 Thok with dry eyes will weep o'er Balder's  
 pyre.  
 Weep him all other things, if weep they  
 will —  
 I weep him not! let Hela keep her prey."  
 She spake, and to the cavern's depth  
 she fled,  
 Mocking; and Hermod knew their toil  
 was vain.  
 And as seafaring men, who long have  
 wrought  
 In the great deep for gain, at last come  
 home,  
 And towards evening see the headlands  
 rise  
 Of their dear country, and can plain descry  
 A fire of wither'd furze which boys have  
 lit  
 Upon the cliffs, or smoke of burning  
 weeds  
 Out of a till'd field inland; — then the  
 wind  
 Catches them, and drives out again to  
 sea;  
 And they go long days tossing up and  
 down  
 Over the gray sea-ridges, and the glimpse  
 Of port they had makes bitterer far their  
 toil —  
 So the Gods' cross was bitterer for their  
 joy.  
 Then, sad at heart, to Niord Hermod  
 spake: —

"It is the accuser Lok, who flouts us all!  
 Ride back, and tell in Heaven this heavy  
 news;  
 I must again below, to Hela's realm."  
 He spoke; and Niord set forth back to  
 Heaven.  
 But northward Hermod rode, the way  
 below,  
 The way he knew; and traversed Giall's  
 stream,  
 And down to Ocean groped, and cross'd  
 the ice,  
 And came beneath the wall, and found  
 the grate  
 Still lifted; well was his return fore-  
 known.  
 And once more Hermod saw around him  
 spread  
 The joyless plains, and heard the streams  
 of Hell.  
 But as he enter'd, on the extremest bound  
 Of Nifheim, he saw one ghost come  
 near,  
 Hovering, and stopping oft, as if afraid —  
 Hoder, the unhappy, whom his own hand  
 slew.  
 And Hermod look'd, and knew his  
 brother's ghost,  
 And call'd him by his name, and sternly  
 said: —  
 "Hoder, ill-fated, blind in heart and  
 eyes!  
 Why tarriest thou to plunge thee in the  
 gulf  
 Of the deep inner gloom, but flittest here,  
 In twilight, on the lonely verge of Hell,  
 Far from the other ghosts, and Hela's  
 throne?  
 Doubtless thou fearest to meet Balder's  
 voice,  
 Thy brother, whom through folly thou  
 didst slay."  
 He spoke; but Hoder answer'd him,  
 and said: —  
 "Hermod the nimble, dost thou still pur-  
 sue  
 The unhappy with reproach, even in the  
 grave?  
 For this I died, and fled beneath the  
 gloom,  
 Not daily to endure abhorring Gods,  
 Nor with a hateful presence cumber  
 Heaven;  
 And canst thou not, even here pass pity-  
 ing by?  
 No less than Balder have I lost the light

Of Heaven, and communion with my kin;  
 I too had once a wife, and once a child,  
 And substance, and a golden house in  
 Heaven —  
 But all I left of my own act, and fled  
 Below, and dost thou hate me even here?  
 Balder upbraids me not, nor hates at all,  
 Though he has cause, have any cause;  
 but he,  
 When that with downcast looks I hither  
 came,  
 Stretch'd forth his hand, and with be-  
 nignant voice,  
*Welcome, he said, if there be welcome here,  
 Brother and fellow-sport of Lok with me!*  
 And not to offend thee, Hermod, nor to  
 force  
 My hated converse on thee, came I up  
 From the deep gloom, where I will now  
 return;  
 But earnestly I long'd to hover near,  
 Not too far off, when that thou camest  
 by;  
 To feel the presence of a brother God,  
 And hear the passage of a horse of  
 Heaven,  
 For the last time — for here thou com'st  
 no more."  
 He spake, and turn'd to go to the inner  
 gloom.  
 But Hermod stay'd him with mild words,  
 and said: —  
 "Thou doest well to chide me, Hoder  
 blind!  
 Truly thou say'st, the planning guilty  
 mind  
 Was Lok's; the unwitting hand alone  
 was thine.  
 But Gods are like the sons of men in  
 this —  
 When they have woe, they blame the  
 nearest cause.  
 Howbeit stay, and be appeased! and  
 tell:  
 Sits Balder still in pomp by Hela's side,  
 Or is he mingled with the unnumber'd  
 dead?"  
 And the blind Hoder answer'd him and  
 spake: —  
 "His place of state remains by Hela's  
 side,  
 But empty; for his wife, for Nanna came  
 lately below, and join'd him; and the  
 pair  
 Frequent the still recesses of the realm  
 Of Hela, and hold converse undisturb'd.



But they too, doubtless, will have  
breathed the balm,  
Which floats before a visitant from  
Heaven,  
And have drawn upward to this verge of  
Hell."

He spake; and, as he ceased, a puff  
of wind

Roll'd heavily the leaden mist aside  
Round where they stood, and they beheld  
two forms

Make toward them o'er the stretching  
cloudy plain.

And Hermod straight perceived them,  
who they were

Balder and Nanna; and to Balder said:—  
"Balder, too truly thou foresaw'st a  
snare!

Lok triumphs still, and Hela keeps her  
prey.

No more to Asgard shalt thou come, nor  
lodge

In thy own house, Bredablik, nor enjoy  
The love all bear toward thee, nor train  
up

Forset, thy son, to be beloved like thee.  
Here must thou lie, and wait an endless  
age.

Therefore for the last time, O Balder,  
hail!"

He spake; and Balder answer'd him,  
and said:—

"Hail and farewell! for here thou com'st  
no more.

Yet mourn not for me, Hermod, when  
thou sitt'st

In Heaven, nor let the other Gods lament,  
As wholly to be pitied, quite forlorn.

For Nanna hath rejoin'd me, who, of old,  
In Heaven, was seldom parted from my  
side;

And still the acceptance follows me,  
which crown'd

My former life, and cheers me even here.  
The iron frown of Hela is relax'd

When I draw nigh, and the wan tribes of  
dead

Love me, and gladly bring for my award  
Their ineffectual feuds and feeble hates—  
Shadows of hates, but they distress them  
still."

And the fleet-footed Hermod made  
reply:—

"Thou hast then all the solace death  
allows,

Esteem and function; and so far is well.

Yet here thou liest, Balder, underground,  
Rusting for ever; and the years roll on,  
The generations pass, the ages grow,  
And bring us nearer to the final day  
When from the south shall march the  
fiery band

And cross the bridge of Heaven, with  
Lok for guide,

And Fenris at his heel with broken chain;  
While from the east the giant Rymer  
steers

His ship, and the great serpent makes to  
land;

And all are marshall'd in one flaming  
square

Against the Gods, upon the plains of  
Heaven.

I mourn thee, that thou canst not help  
us then."

He spake; but Balder answer'd him,  
and said:—

"Mourn not for me! Mourn, Hermod,  
for the Gods;

Mourn for the men on earth, the Gods  
in Heaven,

Who live, and with their eyes shall see  
that day!

The day will come, when fall shall As-  
gard's towers,

And Odin, and his sons, the seed of  
Heaven;

But what were I, to save them in that  
hour?

If strength might save them, could not  
Odin save,

My father, and his pride, the warrior  
Thor,

Vidar the silent, the impetuous Tyr?

I, what were I, when these can nought  
avail?

Yet, doubtless, when the day of battle  
comes,

And the two hosts are marshall'd, and in  
Heaven

The golden-crested cock shall sound  
alarm,

And his black brother-bird from hence  
reply,

And bucklers clash, and spears begin to  
pour—

Longing will stir within my breast,  
though vain.

But not to me so grievous, as, I know,  
To other Gods it were, is my enforced  
Absence from fields where I could noth-  
ing aid;

For I am long since weary of your  
 storm  
 Of carnage, and find, Hermod, in your  
 life  
 Something too much of war and broils,  
 which make  
 Life one perpetual fight, a bath of blood.  
 Mine eyes are dizzy with the arrowy  
 hail;  
 Mine ears are stunn'd with blows, and  
 sick for calm.  
 Inactive therefore let me lie, in gloom,  
 Unarm'd, inglorious; I attend the course  
 Of ages, and my late return to light,  
 In times less alien to a spirit mild,  
 In new-recover'd seats, the happier day."  
 He spake; and the fleet Hermod thus  
 replied: —  
 "Brother, what seats are these, what  
 happier day?  
 Tell me, that I may ponder it when  
 gone."  
 And the ray-crowned Balder answer'd  
 him: —  
 "Far to the south, beyond the blue, there  
 spreads  
 Another Heaven, the boundless — no one  
 yet  
 Hath reach'd it; there hereafter shall  
 arise  
 The second Asgard, with another name.  
 Thither, when o'er this present earth  
 and Heavens  
 The tempest of the latter days hath  
 swept,  
 And they from sight have disappear'd,  
 and sunk,  
 Shall a small remnant of the Gods re-  
 pair;  
 Hoder and I shall join them from the  
 grave.  
 There re-assembling we shall see emerge  
 From the bright Ocean at our feet an  
 earth  
 More fresh, more verdant than the last,  
 with fruits  
 Self-springing, and a seed of man pre-  
 served,  
 Who then shall live in peace, as now in  
 war.  
 But we in Heaven shall find again with  
 joy  
 The ruin'd palaces of Odin, seats  
 Familiar, halls where we have supp'd of  
 old;  
 Re-enter them with wonder, never fill

Our eyes with gazing, and rebuild with  
 tears.  
 And we shall tread once more the well-  
 known plain  
 Of Ida, and among the grass shall find  
 The golden dice wherewith we play'd of  
 yore;  
 And that will bring to mind the former  
 life  
 And pastime of the Gods, the wise dis-  
 course  
 Of Odin, the delights of other days.  
 O Hermod, pray that thou may'st join  
 us then!  
 Such for the future is my hope; mean-  
 while,  
 I rest the thrall of Hela, and endure  
 Death, and the gloom which round me  
 even now  
 Thickens, and to its inner gulf recalls.  
 Farewell, for longer speech is not allow'd!"  
 He spoke, and waved farewell, and gave  
 his hand  
 To Nanna; and she gave their brother  
 blind  
 Her hand, in turn, for guidance; and  
 the three  
 Departed o'er the cloudy plain, and  
 soon  
 Faded from sight into the interior gloom.  
 But Hermod stood beside his drooping  
 horse,  
 Mute, gazing after them in tears; and  
 fain,  
 Fain had he follow'd their receding  
 steps,  
 Though they to death were bound, and  
 he to Heaven,  
 Then; but a power he could not break  
 withheld.  
 And as a stork which idle boys have  
 trapp'd,  
 And tied him in a yard, at autumn sees  
 Flocks of his kind pass flying o'er his  
 head  
 To warmer lands, and coasts that keep  
 the sun; —  
 He strains to join their flight, and from  
 his shed  
 Follows them with a long complaining  
 cry —  
 So Hermod gazed, and yearn'd to join  
 his kin.

At last he sigh'd, and set forth back  
 to Heaven. 1855.

STANZAS FROM THE GRANDE  
CHARTREUSE

THROUGH Alpine meadows soft-suffused  
With rain, where thick the crocus blows,  
Past the dark forges long disused,  
The mule-track from Saint Laurent goes.  
The bridge is cross'd, and slow we ride,  
Through forest, up the mountain-side.

The autumnal evening darkens round,  
The wind is up, and drives the rain;  
While, hark! far down, with strangled  
sound

Doth the Dead Guier's stream complain,  
Where that wet smoke, among the woods,  
Over his boiling cauldron broods.

Swift rush the spectral vapors white  
Past limestone scars with ragged pines,  
Showing — then blotting from our  
sight! —

Halt — through the cloud-drift something  
shines!

High in the valley, wet and drear,  
The huts of Courrierie appear.

*Strike leftward!* cries our guide; and  
higher

Mounts up the stony forest-way.  
At last the encircling trees retire;  
Look! through the showery twilight  
gray

What pointed roofs are these advance? —  
A palace of the Kings of France?

Approach, for what we seek is here!  
Alight, and sparely sup, and wait  
For rest in this outbuilding near;  
Then cross the sward and reach that gate,  
Knock; pass the wicket! Thou art come  
To the Carthusians' world-famed home.

The silent courts, where night and day  
Into their stone-carved basins cold  
The splashing icy fountains play —  
The humid corridors behold!  
Where, ghostlike in the deepening night,  
Cowl'd forms brush by in gleaming white.

The chapel, where no organ's peal  
Invests the stern and naked prayer —  
With penitential cries they kneel  
And wrestle; rising then, with bare  
And white uplifted faces stand,  
Passing the Host from hand to hand;

Each takes, and then his visage wan  
Is buried in his cowl once more.  
The cells! — the suffering Son of Man  
Upon the wall — the knee-worn floor —  
And where they sleep, that wooden bed,  
Which shall their coffin be, when dead!

The library, where tract and tome  
Not to feed priestly pride are there,  
To hymn the conquering march of Rome,  
Nor yet to amuse, as ours are!  
They paint of souls the inner strife,  
Their drops of blood, their death in life.

The garden, overgrown — yet mild,  
See, fragrant herbs are flowering there!  
Strong children of the Alpine wild  
Whose culture is the brethren's care;  
Of human tasks their only one,  
And cheerful works beneath the sun.

Those halls, too, destined to contain  
Each its own pilgrim-host of old,  
From England, Germany, or Spain —  
All are before me! I behold  
The House, the Brotherhood austere!  
— And what am I, that I am here?

For rigorous teachers seized my youth,  
And purged its faith, and trimm'd its fire,  
Show'd me the high, white star of Truth,  
There bade me gaze, and there aspire.  
Even now their whispers pierce the  
gloom;

*What dost thou in this living tomb?*

Forgive me, masters of the mind!  
At whose behest I long ago  
So much unlearn't, so much resign'd —  
I come not here to be your foe!  
I seek these anchorites, not in ruth,  
To curse and to deny your truth;

Not as their friend, or child, I speak!  
But as, on some far northern strand,  
Thinking of his own Gods, a Greek  
In pity and mournful awe might stand  
Before some fallen Runic stone —  
For both were faiths, and both are gone.

Wandering between two worlds, one dead,  
The other powerless to be born,  
With nowhere yet to rest my head,  
Like these, on earth I wait forlorn.  
Their faith, my tears, the world deride —  
I come to shed them at their side.

Oh, hide me in your gloom profound,  
 Ye solemn seats of holy pain!  
 Take me, cowl'd forms, and fence me round  
 Till I possess my soul again;  
 Till free my thoughts before me roll,  
 Not chafed by hourly false control!

For the world cries your faith is now  
 But a dead time's exploded dream;  
 My melancholy, sciolists say,  
 Is a pass'd mode, an outworn theme —  
 As if the world had ever had  
 A faith, or sciolists been sad!

Ah, if it *be* pass'd, take away,  
 At least, the restlessness, the pain;  
 Be man henceforth no more a prey  
 To these out-dated stings again!  
 The nobleness of grief is gone —  
 Ah, leave us not the fret alone!

But — if you cannot give us ease —  
 Last of the race of them who grieve  
 Here leave us to die out with these  
 Last of the people who believe!  
 Silent, while years engrave the brow;  
 Silent — the best are silent now.

Achilles ponders in his tent,  
 The kings of modern thought are dumb;  
 Silent they are, though not content,  
 And wait to see the future come.  
 They have the grief men had of yore,  
 But they contend and cry no more.

Our fathers water'd with their tears  
 This sea of time whereon we sail,  
 Their voices were in all men's ears  
 We pass'd within their puissant hail.  
 Still the same ocean round us raves,  
 But we stand mute, and watch the waves.

For what avail'd it, all the noise  
 And outcry of the former men? —  
 Say, have their sons achieved more joys,  
 Say, is life lighter now than then;  
 The sufferers died, they left their pain —  
 The pangs which tortured them remain.

What helps it now, that Byron bore,  
 With haughty scorn which mock'd the  
     smart,  
 Through Europe to the Ætolian shore  
 The pageant of his bleeding heart?  
 That thousands counted every groan,  
 And Europe made his woe her own?

What boots it, Shelley! that the breeze  
 Carried thy lovely wail away,  
 Musical through Italian trees  
 Which fringe thy soft blue Spezzian bay?  
 Inheritors of thy distress  
 Have restless hearts one throb the less?

Or are we easier, to have read,  
 O Obermann! the sad, stern page,  
 Which tells us how thou hidd'st thy head  
 From the fierce tempest of thine age  
 In the lone brakes of Fontainebleau,  
 Or chalets near the Alpine snow?

Ye slumber in your silent grave! —  
 The world, which for an idle day  
 Grace to your mood of sadness gave,  
 Long since hath flung her weeds away.  
 The eternal trifler breaks your spell;  
 But we — we learned your lore too well!

Years hence, perhaps, may dawn an age,  
 More fortunate, alas! than we,  
 Which without hardness will be sage,  
 And gay without frivolity.  
 Sons of the world, oh, speed those years;  
 But, while we wait, allow our tears!

Allow them! We admire with awe  
 The exulting thunder of your race:  
 You give the universe your law,  
 You triumph over time and space!  
 Your pride of life, your tireless powers,  
 We laud them, but they are not ours.

We are like children rear'd in shade  
 Beneath some old-world abbey wall,  
 Forgotten in a forest-glade,  
 And secret from the eyes of all.  
 Deep, deep the greenwood round them  
     waves,  
 Their abbey, and its close of graves!

But, where the road runs near the stream,  
 Oft through the trees they catch a glance  
 Of passing troops in the sun's beam —  
 Pennon, and plume, and flashing lance!  
 Forth to the world those soldiers fare,  
 To life, to cities, and to war!

And through the wood, another way,  
 Faint bugle-notes from far are borne,  
 Where hunters gather, staghounds bay,  
 Round some fair forest-lodge at morn.  
 Gay dames are there, in sylvan green;  
 Laughter and cries — those notes between!



The banners flashing through the trees  
Make their blood dance and chain their  
eyes;

That bugle-music on the breeze  
Arrests them with a charm'd surprise.  
Banner by turns and bugle woo:  
*Ye shy recluses, follow too!*

O children, what do ye reply? —  
"Action and pleasure, will ye roam  
Through these secluded dells to cry  
And call us? — but too late ye come!  
Too late for us your call ye blow,  
Whose bent was taken long ago.

"Long since we pace this shadow'd nave;  
We watch those yellow tapers shine,  
Emblems of hope over the grave,  
In the high altar's depth divine;  
The organ carries to our ear  
Its accents of another sphere.

"Fenced early in this cloistral round  
Of reverie, of shade, of prayer,  
How should we grow in other ground?  
How can we flower in foreign air?  
— Pass, banners, pass, and bugles, cease;  
And leave our desert to its peace!"

1855.<sup>1</sup>

## FROM SWITZERLAND

ISOLATION. TO MARGUERITE

WE were apart; yet, day by day,  
I bade my heart more constant be.  
I bade it keep the world away,  
And grow a home for only thee;  
Nor fear'd but thy love likewise grew,  
Like mine, each day, more tried, more  
true.

The fault was grave! I might have known,  
What far too soon, alas! I learn'd —  
The heart can bind itself alone,  
And faith may oft be unreturn'd.  
Self-sway'd our feelings ebb and swell —  
Thou lov'st no more; — Farewell! Fare-  
well!

Farewell! — and thou, thou lonely heart,  
Which never yet without remorse  
Even for a moment didst depart  
From thy remote and sphered course

<sup>1</sup> In *Fraser's Magazine*. First included in  
Arnold's *Poetical Works* in 1867.

To haunt the place where passions reign —  
Back to thy solitude again!

Back! with the conscious thrill of shame  
Which Luna felt, that summer-night,  
Flash through her pure immortal frame,  
When she forsook the starry height  
To hang over Endymion's sleep  
Upon the pine-grown Latmian steep.

Yet she, chaste queen, had never proved  
How vain a thing is mortal love,  
Wandering in Heaven, far removed,  
But thou hast long had place to prove.  
This truth — to prove, and make thine  
own:  
"Thou hast been, shalt be, art, alone."

Or, if not quite alone, yet they  
Which touch thee are unmating things —  
Ocean and clouds and night and day;  
Lorn autumns and triumphant springs;  
And life, and others' joy and pain,  
And love, if love, of happier men.

Of happier men — for they, at least,  
Have *dream'd* two human hearts might  
blend

In one, and were through faith released  
From isolation without end  
Prolong'd; nor knew, although not less  
Alone than thou, their loneliness.

1857.

YES! in the sea of life enisled,  
With echoing straits between us thrown,  
Dotting the shoreless watery wild,  
We mortal millions live *alone*.  
The islands feel the enclasping flow,  
And then their endless bounds they know.

But when the moon their hollows lights,  
And they are swept by balms of spring,  
And in their glens on starry nights,  
The nightingales divinely sing;  
And lovely notes, from shore to shore,  
Across the sounds and channels pour —

Oh! then a longing like despair  
Is to their farthest caverns sent;  
For surely once, they feel, we were  
Parts of a single continent!  
Now round us spreads the watery plain —  
Oh, might our marges meet again!



Who order'd, that their longing's fire  
Should be, as soon as kindled, cool'd?  
Who renders vain their deep desires? —  
A God, a God their severance ruled!  
And bade betwixt their shores to be  
The unplumb'd, salt, estranging sea.

(1852.)<sup>1</sup> 1857.

### THYRSIS<sup>2</sup>

A MONODY, *to commemorate the author's friend,*

ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH, *who died at Florence, 1861*

How changed is here each spot man  
makes or fills!

In the two Hinkseys nothing keeps the  
same;

The village street its haunted mansion  
lacks,

And from the sign is gone Sibylla's  
name,

And from the roofs the twisted chim-  
ney-stacks —

Are ye too changed, ye hills?

Sec, 'tis no foot of unfamiliar men

To-night from Oxford up your path-  
way strays!

Here came I often, often, in old  
days —

Thyrsis and I; we still had Thyrsis  
then.

Runs it not here, the track by Childs-  
worth Farm,

Past the high wood, to where the elm-  
tree crowns

The hill behind whose ridge the sun-  
set flames?

The signal-elm, that looks on the Ilsley  
Downs,

The Vale, the three lone weirs, the  
youthful Thames? —

This winter-eve is warm,

Humid the air! leafless, yet soft as  
spring,

The tender purple spray on copse  
and briars!

And that sweet city with her dream-  
ing spires,

She needs not June for beauty's height-  
ening.

Lovely all times she lies, lovely to-  
night! —

Only, methinks, some loss of habit's  
power

Befalls me wandering through this  
upland dim.

Once pass'd I blindfold here, at any  
hour;

Now seldom come I, since I came  
with him.

That single elm-tree bright  
Against the west — I miss it! is it  
gone?

We prized it dearly; while it stood,  
we said,

Our friend, the Gipsy-Scholar, was  
not dead;

While the tree lived, he in these fields  
lived on.

Too rare, too rare, grow now my visits  
here,

But once I knew each field, each flower,  
each stick;

And with the country-folk acquaint-  
ance made

By barn in threshing-time, by newbuilt  
rick.

Here, too, our shepherd-pipes we first  
assay'd.

Ah me! this many a year

My pipe is lost, my shepherd's holiday!  
Needs must I lose them, needs with  
heavy heart

Into the world and wave of men de-  
part;

But Thyrsis of his own will went away.

It irk'd him to be here, he could not rest.  
He loved each simple joy the country  
yields,

He loved his mates; but yet he could  
not keep,

For that a shadow lour'd on the fields,  
Here with the shepherds and the silly  
sheep.

Some life of men unblest

<sup>1</sup> Standing alone, under the title: "To Marguerite."

<sup>2</sup> There are in the English language three elegiac poems so great that they eclipse and efface all the elegiac poetry we know; all of Italian, all of Greek. It is only because the latest born is yet new to us that it can seem strange or rash to say so. The *Thyrsis* of Mr. Arnold makes a third with *Lycidas* and *Adonais*. . . . *Thyrsis*, like *Lycidas*, has a quiet and tender undertone which gives it something of sacred. (Swinburne.)

He knew, which made him droop, and  
fill'd his head.

He went; his piping took a troubled  
sound

Of storms that rage outside our  
happy ground;

He could not wait their passing, he is  
dead.

So, some tempestuous morn in early June,  
When the year's primal burst of bloom  
is o'er,

Before the roses and the longest  
day —

When garden-walks and all the grassy  
floor

With blossoms red and white of fallen  
May

And chestnut-flowers are strewn —  
So have I heard the cuckoo's parting  
cry,

From the wet field, through the vext  
garden-trees,

Come with the volleying rain and  
tossing breeze:

*The bloom is gone, and with the bloom  
go I!*

Too quick despairer, wherefore wilt thou  
go?

Soon will the high Midsummer pomps  
come on,

Soon will the musk carnations break  
and swell,

Soon shall we have gold-dusted snap-  
dragon,

Sweet-William with his homely cot-  
tage-smell,

And stocks in fragrant blow;

Roses that down the alleys shine afar,  
And open, jasmine-muffled lattices,

And groups under the dreaming  
garden trees,

And the full moon, and the white  
evening-star.

He harkens not! light comer, he is flown!  
What matters it? next year he will  
return,

And we shall have him in the sweet  
spring-days,

With whitening hedges, and un-  
crumpling fern,

And blue-bells trembling by the  
forest-ways,

And scent of hay new-mown.

But Thyrsis never more we swains  
shall see;

See him come back, and cut a  
smoother reed,

And blow a strain the world at last  
shall heed —

For Time, not Corydon, hath conquer'd  
thee!

Alack, for Corydon no rival now! —

But when Sicilian shepherds lost a  
mate,

Some good survivor with his flute  
would go,

Piping a ditty sad for Bion's fate;  
And cross the unpermitted ferry's

flow,

And relax Pluto's brow,

And make leap up with joy the beaute-  
ous head

Of Proserpine, among whose crown'd  
hair

Are flowers first open'd on Sicilian air,  
And flute his friend, like Orpheus,  
from the dead.

O easy access to the hearer's grace

When Dorian shepherds sang to Pro-  
serpine!

For she herself had trod Sicilian  
fields,

She knew the Dorian water's gush  
divine,

She knew each lily white which  
Enna yields,

Each rose with blushing face;

She loved the Dorian pipe, the Dorian  
strain.

But ah, of our poor Thames she  
never heard!

Her foot the Cumner cowslips never  
stirr'd;

And we should tease her with our plaint  
in vain!

Well! wind-dispersed and vain the words  
will be,

Yet, Thyrsis, let me give my grief its  
hour

In the old haunt, and find our tree-  
topp'd hill!

Who, if not I, for questing here hath  
power?

I know the wood which hides the  
daffodil,

I know the Fyfield tree,

I know what white, what purple fritillaries  
 The grassy harvest of the river-fields,  
 Above by Ensham, down by Sandford, yields.  
 And what sedged brooks are Thames's tributaries;

I know these slopes; who knows them if not I? —  
 But many a dingle on the loved hill-side,  
 With thorns once studded, old, white-blossom'd trees,  
 Where thick the cowslips grew, and far descried  
 High tower'd the spikes of purple orchises,  
 Hath since our day put by  
 The coronals of that forgotten time;  
 Down each green bank hath gone the ploughboy's team,  
 And only in the hidden brookside gleam  
 Primroses, orphans of the flowery prime.

Where is the girl, who by the boatman's door,  
 Above the locks, above the boating throng,  
 Unmoor'd our skiff when through the Wytham flats,  
 Red loosestrife and blond meadow-sweet among  
 And darting swallows and light water-gnats,  
 We track'd the shy Thames shore?  
 Where are the mowers, who, as the tiny swell  
 Of our boat passing heaved the river-grass,  
 Stood with suspended scythe to see us pass? —  
 They all are gone, and thou art gone as well!

Yes, thou art gone! and round me too the night  
 In ever-nearing circle weaves her shade.  
 I see her veil draw soft across the day,  
 I feel her slowly chilling breath invade  
 The cheek grown thin, the brown hair sprent with gray;  
 I feel her finger light

Laid pausefully upon life's headlong train; —  
 The foot less prompt to meet the morning dew,  
 The heart less bounding at emotion new,  
 And hope, once crush'd, less quick to spring again.

And long the way appears, which seem'd so short  
 To the less practised eye of sanguine youth;  
 And high the mountain-tops, in cloudy air,  
 The mountain-tops where is the throne of Truth,  
 Tops in life's morning-sun so bright and bare!  
 Unbreachable the fort  
 Of the long-batter'd world uplifts its wall;  
 And strange and vain the earthly turmoil grows,  
 And near and real the charm of thy repose,  
 And night as welcome as a friend would fall.

But hush! the upland hath a sudden loss  
 Of quiet! — Look, adown the dusk hill-side,  
 A troop of Oxford hunters going home,  
 As in old days, jovial and talking, ride!  
 From hunting with the Berkshire hounds they come,  
 Quick! let me fly, and cross  
 Into yon further field! — 'Tis done, and see,  
 Back'd by the sunset, which doth glorify  
 The orange and pale violet evening-sky,  
 Bare on its lonely ridge, the Tree! the Tree!

I take the omen! Eve lets down her veil,  
 The white fog creeps from bush to bush about.  
 The west unflushes, the high stars grow bright,  
 And in the scatter'd farms the lights come out.

I cannot reach the signal-tree to-  
 night,  
 Yet, happy omen, hail!  
 Hear it from thy broad lucent Arno-  
 vale  
 (For there thine earth-forgetting  
 eyelids keep  
 The morningless and unawakening  
 sleep  
 Under the flowery oleanders pale),  
 Hear it, O Thyrsis, still our tree is  
 there! —  
 Ah, vain! These English fields, this up-  
 land dim,  
 These brambles pale with mist en-  
 garlanded,  
 That lone, sky-pointing tree, are not  
 for him;  
 To a boon southern country he is  
 fled,  
 And now in happier air,  
 Wandering with the great Mother's  
 train divine  
 (And purer or more subtle soul than  
 thee,  
 I trow, the mighty Mother doth not  
 see)  
 Within a folding of the Apennine,  
 Thou hearest the immortal chants of  
 old! —  
 Putting his sickle to the perilous grain  
 In the hot cornfield of the Phrygian  
 king,  
 For thee the Lityrses-song again  
 Young Daphnis with his silver voice  
 doth sing;  
 Sings his Sicilian fold,  
 His sheep, his hapless love, his blinded  
 eyes —  
 And how a call celestial round him  
 rang,  
 And heavenward from the fountain-  
 brink he sprang,  
 And all the marvel of the golden skies.  
 There thou art gone, and me thou leavest  
 here  
 Sole in these fields! yet will I not de-  
 spair.  
 Despair I will not, while I yet descry  
 'Neath the mild canopy of English air  
 That lonely tree against the western  
 sky.  
 Still, still these slopes, 'tis clear,

Our Gipsy-Scholar haunts, outliving  
 thee!  
 Fields where soft sheep from cages  
 pull the hay,  
 Woods with anemones in flower till  
 May,  
 Know him a wanderer still; then why  
 not me?  
 A fugitive and gracious light he seeks,  
 Shy to illumine; and I seek it too.  
 This does not come with houses or  
 with gold,  
 With place, with honor, and a flatter-  
 ing crew;  
 'Tis not in the world's market  
 bought and sold —  
 But the smooth-slipping weeks  
 Drop by, and leave its seeker still un-  
 tired;  
 Out of the heed of mortals he is gone,  
 He wends unfollow'd, he must house  
 alone;  
 Yet on he fares, by his own heart in-  
 spired.  
 Thou too, O Thyrsis, on like quest wast  
 bound;  
 Thou wanderedst with me for a little  
 hour!  
 Men gave thee nothing; but this  
 happy quest,  
 If men esteemed thee feeble, gave thee  
 power,  
 If men procured thee trouble, gave  
 thee rest.  
 And this rude Cumner ground,  
 Its fir-topped Hurst, its farms, its quiet  
 fields,  
 Here cams't thou in thy jocund  
 youthful time,  
 Here was thine height of strength,  
 thy golden prime!  
 And still the haunt beloved a virtue  
 yields.  
 What though the music of thy rustic flute  
 Kept not for long its happy, country  
 tone;  
 Lost it too soon, and learnt a stormy  
 note  
 Of men contention-tost, of men who  
 groan,  
 Which task'd thy pipe too sore, and  
 tired thy throat —  
 It fail'd, and thou wast mute!

Yet hadst thou always visions of our  
light,  
And long with men of care thou  
couldst not stay.  
And soon thy foot resumed its wan-  
dering way,  
Left human haunt, and on alone till  
night.

Too rare, too rare, grow now my visits  
here!

'Mid city-noise, not, as with thee of  
yore,

Thyrsis! in reach of sheep-bells is my  
home.

— Then through the great town's  
harsh, heart-wearying roar,  
Let in thy voice a whisper often  
come,

To chase fatigue and fear:

*Why faintest thou! I wander'd till I died.  
Roam on! The light we sought is shin-  
ing still.*

*Dost thou ask proof? Our tree yet  
crowns the hill,*

*Our Scholar travels yet the loved hill-side.*  
1866.

#### YOUTH AND CALM

'Tis death! and peace, indeed, is here,  
And ease from shame, and rest from fear.  
There's nothing can disarm now  
The smoothness of that limpid brow.  
But is a calm like this, in truth,  
The crowning end of life and youth,  
And when this boon rewards the dead,  
Are all debts paid, has all been said?  
And is the heart of youth so light,  
Its step so firm, its eyes so bright,  
Because on its hot brow there blows  
A wind of promise and repose  
From the far grave, to which it goes;  
Because it hath the hope to come,  
One day, to harbor in the tomb?  
Ah no, the bliss youth dreams is one  
For daylight, for the cheerful sun,  
For feeling nerves and living breath —  
Youth dreams a bliss on this side death.  
It dreams a rest, if not more deep,  
More grateful than this marble sleep;  
It hears a voice within it tell:  
*Calm's not life's crown, though calm is well.*  
'Tis all perhaps which man acquires,  
But 'tis not what our youth desires.  
1867.

#### AUSTERITY OF POETRY

THAT son of Italy who tried to blow,  
Ere Dante came, the trump of sacred song,  
In his light youth amid a festal throng  
Sate with his bride to see a public show.  
Fair was the bride, and on her front did  
glow

Youth like a star; and what to youth  
belong —

Gay raiment, sparkling gauds, elation  
strong.

A prop gave way! crash fell a platform!  
lo,

'Mid struggling sufferers, hurt to death,  
she lay!

Shuddering, they drew her garments off  
— and found

A robe of sackcloth next the smooth,  
white skin.

Such, poets, is your bride, the Muse!  
young, gay,

Radiant, adorn'd outside; a hidden  
ground

Of thought and of austerity within.

1867.

#### WORLDLY PLACE

*Even in a palace, life may be led well!*

So spake the imperial sage, purest of men,  
Marcus Aurelius. But the stifling den  
Of common life, where, crowded up pell-  
mell,

Our freedom for a little bread we sell,  
And drudge under some foolish master's  
ken

Who rates us if we peer outside our pen —  
Match'd with a palace, is not this a hell?

*Even in a palace!* On his truth sincere,  
Who spoke these words, no shadow ever  
came;

And when my ill-school'd spirit is aflame  
Some nobler, ampler stage of life to win,  
I'll stop, and say: "There were no suc-  
cor here!

The aids to noble life are all within."

1867.

#### EAST LONDON

'Twas August, and the fierce sun over-  
head

Smote on the squalid streets of Bethnal  
Green,

And the pale weaver, through his win-  
dows seen



In Spitalfields, look'd thrice dispirited,  
I met a preacher there I knew, and said:  
"Ill and o'erwork'd, how fare you in this  
scene?" —

"Bravely!" said he; "for I of late have  
been

Much cheer'd with thoughts of Christ,  
*the living bread.*"

O human soul! as long as thou canst so  
Set up a mark of everlasting light,  
Above the howling senses' ebb and flow,  
To cheer thee, and to right thee if thou  
room —

Not with lost toil thou laborest through  
the night!

Thou mak'st the heaven thou hop'st  
indeed thy home. 1867.

## WEST LONDON

CROUCH'D on the pavement, close by  
Belgrave Square,  
A tramp I saw, ill, moody, and tongue-  
tied.

A babe was in her arms, and at her side  
A girl; their clothes were rags, their feet  
were bare.

Some laboring men, whose work lay  
somewhere there,

Pass'd opposite; she touch'd her girl, who  
hied

Across, and begg'd, and came back satis-  
fied.

The rich she had let pass with frozen  
stare.

Thought I: "Above her state this spirit  
towers;

She will not ask of aliens, but of friends,  
Of sharers in a common human fate.

She turns from that cold succor, which  
attends

The unknown little from the unknowing  
great,

And points us to a better time than ours." 1867.

## EAST AND WEST

IN the bare midst of Anglesey they show  
Two springs which close by one another  
play;

And, "Thirteen hundred years ago,"  
they say,

"Two saints met often where those  
waters flow.

One came from Penmon westward, and a  
glow

Whiten'd his face from the sun's fronting  
ray;

Eastward the other, from the dying day,  
And he with unsunn'd face did always  
go."

*Seiriol the Bright, Kybi the Dark!* men  
said.

The seër from the East was then in light,  
The seër from the West was then in shade.

Ah! now 'tis changed. In conquering  
sunshine bright

The man of the bold West now comes  
array'd;

He of the mystic East is touch'd with  
night. 1867.

## THE BETTER PART

LONG fed on boundless hopes, O race of  
man,

How angrily thou spurn'st all simpler  
fare!

"Christ," some one says, "was human as  
we are;

No judge eyes us from Heaven, our sin  
to scan;

We live no more, when we have done our  
span."

"Well, then, for Christ," thou answerest,  
"who can care?

From sin, which Heaven records not, why  
forebear?

Live we like brutes our life without a  
plan!"

So answerest thou; but why not rather  
say:

"Hath man no second life? — *Pitch this  
one high!*

Sits there no judge in Heaven, our sin to  
see? —

*More strictly, then, the inward judge obey!*  
Was Christ a man like us? *Ah! let us try*

*If we then, too, can be such men as he!"* 1867.

## IMMORTALITY

FOIL'D by our fellow-men, depress'd, out-  
worn,

We leave the brutal world to take its way,  
And, *Patience! in another life*, we say,

*The world shall be thrust down, and we up-  
borne.*

And will not, then, the immortal armies  
 scorn  
 The world's poor, routed leavings? or  
 will they,  
 Who fail'd under the heat of this life's  
 day,  
 Support the fervors of the heavenly  
 morn?  
 No, no! the energy of life may be  
 Kept on after the grave, but not begun;  
 And he who flagg'd not in the earthly  
 strife,  
 From strength to strength advancing —  
 only he,  
 His soul well-knit, and all his battles  
 won,  
 Mounts, and that hardly, to eternal life.  
 1867.

## DOVER BEACH

THE sea is calm to-night,  
 The tide is full, the moon lies fair  
 Upon the straits; — on the French coast  
 the light  
 Gleams and is gone; the cliffs of England  
 stand,  
 Glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil  
 bay.  
 Come to the window, sweet is the night-  
 air!  
 Only, from the long line of spray  
 Where the sea meets the moon-blanch'd  
 land,  
 Listen! you hear the grating roar  
 Of pebbles which the waves draw back,  
 and fling,  
 At their return, up the high strand,  
 Begin, and cease, and then again begin,  
 With tremulous cadence slow, and bring  
 The eternal note of sadness in.

Sophocles long ago  
 Heard it on the Ægean, and it brought  
 Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow  
 Of human misery; we  
 Find also in the sound a thought,  
 Hearing it by the distant northern sea.

The Sea of Faith  
 Was once, too, at the full, and round  
 earth's shore  
 Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furl'd.  
 But now I only hear  
 Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,  
 Retreating, to the breath

Of the night-wind, down the vast edges  
 drear  
 And naked shingles of the world.  
 Ah, love, let us be true  
 To one another! for the world, which  
 seems  
 To lie before us like a land of dreams,  
 So various, so beautiful, so new,  
 Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor  
 light,  
 Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for  
 pain;  
 And we are here as on a darkling plain  
 Swept with confused alarms of struggle  
 and flight,  
 Where ignorant armies clash by night.  
 1867.

## GROWING OLD

WHAT is it to grow old?  
 Is it to lose the glory of the form,  
 The lustre of the eye?  
 Is it for beauty to forego her wreath?  
 — Yes, but not this alone.

Is it to feel our strength —  
 Not our bloom only, but our strength —  
 decay?  
 Is it to feel each limb  
 Grow stiffer, every function less exact,  
 Each nerve more loosely strung?

Yes, this, and more; but not  
 Ah, 'tis not what in youth we dream'd  
 'twould be!  
 'Tis not to have our life  
 Mellow'd and soften'd as with sunset-  
 glow,  
 A golden day's decline.

'Tis not to see the world  
 As from a height, with rapt prophetic  
 eyes,  
 And heart profoundly stirr'd;  
 And weep, and feel the fulness of the  
 past,  
 The years that are no more.

It is to spend long days  
 And not once feel that we were ever  
 young;  
 It is to add, immured  
 In the hot prison of the present, month  
 To month with weary pain.

It is to suffer this,  
And feel but half, and feebly, what we  
    feel.  
Deep in our hidden heart  
Festers the dull remembrance of a change,  
But no emotion — none.

It is — last stage of all —  
When we are frozen up within, and quite  
The phantom of ourselves,  
To hear the world applaud the hollow  
    ghost  
Which blamed the living man. 1867.

## PIS-ALLER

"MAN is blind because of sin,  
Revelation makes him sure;  
Without that, who looks within,  
Looks in vain, for all's obscure."

Nay, look closer into man!  
Tell me, can you find indeed  
Nothing sure, no moral plan  
Clear prescribed, without your creed?

"No, I nothing can perceive!  
Without that, all's dark for men.  
That, or nothing, I believe." —  
For God's sake, believe it then!

1867.

## THE LAST WORD

CREEP into thy narrow bed,  
Creep, and let no more be said!  
Vain thy onset! all stands fast.  
Thou thyself must break at last.

Let the long contention cease!  
Geese are swans, and swans are geese.  
Let them have it how they will!  
Thou art tired; best be still.

They out-talk'd thee, hiss'd thee, tore  
    thee?

Better men fared thus before thee;  
Fired their ringing shot and pass'd,  
Hotly charged — and sank at last.

Charge once more, then, and be dumb!  
Let the victors, when they come,  
When the forts of folly fall,  
Find thy body by the wall! 1867.

## BACCHANALIA

OR

THE NEW AGE

I

THE evening comes, the fields are still.  
The tinkle of the thirsty rill,  
Unheard all day, ascends again;  
Deserted is the half-mown plain,  
Silent the swaths! the ringing wain,  
The mower's cry, the dog's alarms,  
All housed within the sleeping farms!  
The business of the day is done,  
The last-left haymaker is gone.  
And from the thyme upon the height,  
And from the elder-blossom white  
And pale dog-roses in the hedge,  
And from the mint-plant in the sedge,  
In puffs of balm the night-air blows  
The perfume which the day forgoes.  
And on the pure horizon far,  
See, pulsing with the first-born star,  
The liquid sky above the hill!  
The evening comes, the fields are still.

Loitering and leaping,  
With saunter, with bounds —  
Flickering and circling  
In files and in rounds —  
Gaily their pine-staff green  
Tossing in air,  
Loose o'er their shoulders white  
Showering their hair —  
See! the wild Mænads  
Break from the wood,  
Youth and Iacchus  
Maddening their blood,  
See! through the quiet land  
Rioting they pass —  
Fling the fresh-heaps about,  
Trample the grass.  
Tear from the rifled hedge  
Garlands, their prize;  
Fill with their sports the field,  
Fill with their cries.

Shepherd, what ails thee, then?  
Shepherd, why mute?  
Forth with thy joyous song!  
Forth with thy flute!  
Tempt not the revel blithe?  
Lure not their cries?  
Glow not their shoulders smooth?  
Melt not their eyes?

Is not, on cheeks like those,  
Lovely the flush?  
— *Ah, so the quiet was!*  
*So was the hush!*

## II

The epoch ends, the world is still.  
The age has talk'd and work'd its fill —  
The famous orators have shone,  
The famous poets sung and gone,  
The famous men of war have fought,  
The famous speculators thought,  
The famous players, sculptors, wrought,  
The famous painters fill'd their wall,  
The famous critics judg'd it all.  
The combatants are parted now —  
Uphung the spear, unbent the bow,  
The puissant crown'd, the weak laid low.  
And in the after-silence sweet,  
Now strifes are hush'd, our ears doth

meet,  
Ascending pure, the bell-like fame  
Of this or that down-trodden name,  
Delicate spirits, push'd away  
In the hot press of the noon-day.  
And o'er the plain, where the dead age  
Did its now silent warfare wage —  
O'er that wide plain, now wrapt in gloom,  
Where many a splendor finds its tomb,  
Many spent fames and fallen might —  
The one or two immortal lights  
Rise slowly up into the sky  
To shine there everlastingly,  
Like stars over the bounding hill.  
The epoch ends, the world is still.

Thundering and bursting  
In torrents, in waves —  
Carolling and shouting  
Over tombs, amid graves —  
See! on the cumber'd plain  
Clearing a stage,  
Scattering the past about,  
Comes the new age.  
Bards make new poems,  
Thinkers new schools,  
Statesmen new systems,  
Critics new rules.  
All things begin again;  
Life is their prize;  
Earth with their deeds they fill,  
Fill with their cries.

Poet, what ails thee, then?  
Say, why so mute?  
Forth with thy praising voice!

Forth with thy flute!  
Loiterer! why sittest thou  
Sunk in thy dream?  
Tempt not the bright new age?  
Shines not its stream?  
Look, ah, what genius,  
Art, science, wit!  
Soldiers like Cæsar,  
Statesmen like Pitt!  
Sculptors like Phidias,  
Raphaels in shoals,  
Poets like Shakespeare —  
Beautiful souls!  
See, on their glowing cheeks  
Heavenly the flush!  
— *Ah, so the silence was!*  
*So was the hush!*

The world but feels the present's spell  
The poet feels the past as well;  
Whatever men have done, might do,  
Whatever thought, might think it too.  
1867.

## PALLADIUM

SET where the upper streams of Simois  
flow  
Was the Palladium, high 'mid rock and  
wood;  
And Hector was in Ilium, far below,  
And fought, and saw it not — but there it  
stood!

It stood, and sun and moonshine rain'd  
their light  
On the pure columns of its glen-built hall,  
Backward and forward roll'd the waves of  
fight  
Round Troy — but while this stood, Troy  
could not fall.

So, in its lovely moonlight, lives the soul.  
Mountains surround it and sweet virgin  
air;  
Cold plashing, past it, crystal waters roll;  
We visit it by moments, ah, too rare!

We shall renew the battle in the plain  
To-morrow; red with blood will Xanthus  
be;  
Hector and Ajax will be there again,  
Helen will come upon the wall to see.

Then we shall rust in shade, or shine in  
strife,

And fluctuate 'twixt blind hopes and  
blind despairs,  
And fancy that we put forth all our life,  
And never know how with the soul it  
fares.

Still doth the soul, from its lone fastness  
high,  
Upon our life a ruling effluence send.  
And when it fails, fight as we will, we die;  
And while it lasts, we cannot wholly end.  
1867.

## A WISH

I ASK not that my bed of death  
From bands of greedy heirs be free;  
For these besiege the latest breath  
Of fortune's favor'd sons, not me.

I ask not each kind soul to keep  
Tearless, when of my death he hears.  
Let those who will, if any, weep!  
There are worse plagues on earth than  
tears.

I ask but that my death may find  
The Freedom to my life denied;  
Ask but the folly of mankind  
Then, then at last, to quit my side.

Spare me the whispering, crowded room,  
The friends who come, and gape, and go;  
The ceremonious air of gloom —  
All, which makes death a hideous show!

Nor bring, to see me cease to live,  
Some doctor full of phrase and fame,  
To shake his sapient head, and give  
The ill he cannot cure a name.

Nor fetch, to take the accustom'd toll  
Of the poor sinner bound for death,  
His brother-doctor of the soul,  
To canvass with official breath

The future and its viewless things —  
That undiscover'd mystery  
Which one who feels death's winnowing  
wings  
Must needs read clearer, sure, than he!

Bring none of these; but let me be,  
While all around in silence lies,  
Moved to the window near, and see  
Once more, before my dying eyes,

Bathed in the sacred dew of morn  
The wide aerial landscape spread —  
The world which was ere I was born,  
The world which lasts when I am dead;

Which never was the friend of *one*,  
Nor promised love it could not give,  
But lit for all its generous sun,  
And lived itself, and made us live.

There let me gaze, till I become  
In soul, with what I gaze on, wed!  
To feel the universe my home;  
To have before my mind — instead

Of the sick room, the mortal strife,  
The turmoil for a little breath —  
The pure eternal course of life,  
Not human combatings with death

Thus feeling, gazing, might I grow  
Composed, refresh'd, ennobled, clear;  
Then willing let my spirit go  
To work or wait elsewhere or here!  
1867.

## RUGBY CHAPEL

NOVEMBER 1857

COLDLY, sadly descends  
The autumn-evening. The field  
Strewn with its dank yellow drifts  
Of wither'd leaves, and the elms,  
Fade into dimness apace,  
Silent; — hardly a shout  
From a few boys late at their play!  
The lights come out in the street,  
In the school-room windows; — but cold,  
Solemn, unlighted, austere,  
Through the gathering darkness, arise  
The chapel-walls, in whose bound  
Thou, my father! art laid.

There thou dost lie, in the gloom  
Of the autumn evening. But ah!  
That word, *gloom*, to my mind  
Brings thee back, in the light  
Of thy radiant vigor, again;  
In the gloom of November we pass'd  
Days not dark at thy side;  
Seasons impair'd not the ray  
Of thy buoyant cheerfulness clear.  
Such thou wast! and I stand  
In the autumn evening and think  
Of bygone autumns with thee.



Fifteen years have gone round  
 Since thou arosest to tread,  
 In the summer-morning, the road  
 Of death, at a call unforeseen,  
 Sudden. For fifteen years,  
 We who till then in thy shade  
 Rested as under the boughs  
 Of a mighty oak, have endured  
 Sunshine and rain as we might,  
 Bare, unshaded, alone,  
 Lacking the shelter of thee.

O strong soul, by what shore  
 Tarriest thou now? For that force,  
 Surely, has not been left vain!  
 Somewhere, surely, afar,  
 In the sounding labor-house vast  
 Of being, is practised that strength,  
 Zealous, beneficent, firm!

Yes, in some far-shining sphere,  
 Conscious or not of the past,  
 Still thou performest the word  
 Of the Spirit in whom thou dost live —  
 Prompt, unwearied, as here!  
 Still thou upraiest with zeal  
 The humble good from the ground,  
 Sternly represses the bad!  
 Still, like a trumpet, dost rouse  
 Those who with half-open eyes  
 Tread the border-land dim  
 Twixt vice and virtue; reviv'st,  
 Succorest! — this was thy work;  
 This was thy life upon earth.

What is the course of the life  
 Of mortal men on the earth? —  
 Most men eddy about  
 Here and there — eat and drink,  
 Chatter and love and hate,  
 Gather and squander, are raised  
 Aloft, are hurl'd in the dust,  
 Striving blindly, achieving  
 Nothing; and then they die —  
 Perish; — and no one asks  
 Who or what they have been,  
 More than he asks what waves,  
 In the moonlit solitudes mild  
 Of the midmost Ocean, have swell'd,  
 Foam'd for a moment, and gone.

And there are some, whom a thirst  
 Ardent, unquenchable, fires,  
 Not with the crowd to be spent,  
 Not without aim to go round  
 In an eddy of purposeless dust,

Effort unmeaning and vain.  
 Ah yes! some of us strive  
 Not without action to die  
 Fruitless, but something to snatch  
 From dull oblivion, nor all  
 Glut the devouring grave!  
 We, we have chosen our path —  
 Path to a clear-purposed goal,  
 Path of advance! — but it leads  
 A long, steep journey, through sunk  
 Gorges, o'er mountains in snow.  
 Cheerful, with friends, we set forth —  
 Then on the height, comes the storm.  
 Thunder crashes from rock  
 To rock, the cataracts reply,  
 Lightnings dazzle our eyes.  
 Roaring torrents have breach'd  
 The track, the stream-bed descends  
 In the place where the wayfarer once  
 Planted his footstep — the spray  
 Boils o'er its borders! aloft  
 The unseen snow-beds dislodge  
 Their hanging ruin; alas,  
 Havoc is made in our train!  
 Friends who set forth at our side,  
 Falter, are lost in the storm.  
 We, we only are left!  
 With frowning foreheads, with lips  
 Sternly compress'd, we strain on,  
 On — and at nightfall at last  
 Come to the end of our way,  
 To the lonely inn 'mid the rocks;  
 Where the gaunt and taciturn host  
 Stands on the threshold, the wind  
 Shaking his thin white hairs —  
 Holds his lantern to scan  
 Our storm-beat figures, and asks:  
 Whom in our party we bring?  
 Whom we have left in the snow?

Sadly we answer: We bring  
 Only ourselves! we lost  
 Sight of the rest in the storm.  
 Hardly ourselves we fought through,  
 Stripp'd, without friends, as we are.  
 Friends, companions, and train,  
 The avalanche swept from our side.

But thou would'st not *alone*  
 Be saved, my father! *alone*  
 Conquer and come to thy goal,  
 Leaving the rest in the wild.  
 We were weary, and we  
 Fearful, and we in our march  
 Fain to drop down and to die.  
 Still thou turnedst, and still

Beckonedst the trembler, and still  
Gavest the weary thy hand.

If, in the paths of the world,  
Stones might have wounded thy feet,  
Toil or dejection have tried  
Thy spirit, of that we saw  
Nothing — to us thou wast still  
Cheerful, and helpful, and firm!  
Therefore to thee it was given  
Many to save with thyself;  
And, at the end of thy day,  
O faithful shepherd! to come,  
Bringing thy sheep in thy hand.  
And through thee I believe  
In the noble and great who are gone;  
Pure souls honor'd and blest  
By former ages, who else —  
Such, so soulless, so poor,  
Is the race of men whom I see —  
Seem'd but a dream of the heart,  
Seem'd but a cry of desire.  
Yes! I believe that there lived  
Others like thee in the past,  
Not like the men of the crowd  
Who all round me to-day  
Bluster or cringe, and make life  
Hideous, and arid, and vile;  
But souls temper'd with fire,  
Fervent, heroic, and good,  
Helpers and friends of mankind.

Servants of God! — or sons  
Shall I not call you? because  
Not as servants ye knew  
Your Father's innermost mind,  
His, who unwillingly sees  
One of his little ones lost —  
Yours is the praise, if mankind  
Hath not as yet in its march  
Fainted, and fallen, and died!

See! In the rocks of the world  
Marches the host of mankind,  
A feeble, wavering line.  
Where are they tending? — A God  
Marshall'd them, gave them their goal.  
Ah, but the way is so long!  
Years they have been in the wild!  
Sore thirst plagues them, the rocks,  
Rising all round, overawe;  
Faction divide them, their host  
Threatens to break, to dissolve.  
— Ah, keep, keep them combined  
Else, of the myriads who fill  
That army, not one shall arrive;

Sole they shall stray; in the rocks  
Stagger for ever in vain.  
Die one by one in the waste.

Then, in such hour of need  
Of your fainting, dispirited race,  
Ye, like angels, appear,  
Radiant with ardor divine!  
Beacons of hope, ye appear!  
Languor is not in your heart,  
Weakness is not in your word,  
Weariness not on your brow,  
Ye alight in our van! at your voice,  
Panic, despair, flee away.  
Ye move through the ranks, recall  
The stragglers, refresh the outworn,  
Praise, re-inspire the brave!  
Order, courage, return;  
Eyes rekindling, and prayers,  
Follow your steps as ye go.  
Ye fill up the gaps in our files,  
Strengthen the wavering line,  
Stablish, continue our march,  
On, to the bound of the waste,  
On, to the City of God. 1867.

## HEINE

(FROM HEINE'S GRAVE)

THE Spirit of the world,  
Beholding the absurdity of men —  
Their vaunts, their feats — let a sardonic  
smile,  
For one short moment, wander o'er his  
lips.  
*That smile was Heine!* — for its earthly  
hour  
The strange guest sparkled: now 'tis  
pass'd away.  
That was Heine! and we,  
Myriads who live, who have lived,  
What are we all, but a mood,  
A single mood, of the life  
Of the Spirit in whom we exist,  
Who alone is all things in one?  
Spirit, who fillest us all!  
Spirit, who utterest in each  
New-coming son of mankind  
Such of thy thoughts as thou wilt!  
O thou, one of whose moods,  
Bitter and strange, was the life  
Of Heine — his strange, alas,  
His bitter life! — may a life  
Other and milder be mine!

May'st thou a mood more serene,  
 Happier, have utter'd in mine!  
 May'st thou the rapture of peace  
 Deep have embreathed at its core;  
 Made it a ray of thy thought,  
 Made it a beat of thy joy! 1867.

### OBERMANN ONCE MORE

*Savez-vous quelque bien qui console du regret d'un monde?*  
 OBERMANN.

GLION? — Ah, twenty years, it cuts<sup>1</sup>  
 All meaning from a name!  
 White houses prank where once were huts.  
 Glion, but not the same!

And yet I know not! All unchanged  
 The turf, the pines, the sky!  
 The hills in their old order ranged;  
 The lake, with Chillon by!

And, 'neath those chestnut-trees, where  
 stiff  
 And stony mounts the way,  
 The crackling husk-heaps burn, as if  
 I left them yesterday!

Across the valley, on that slope,  
 The huts of Avant shine!  
 Its pines, under their branches, ope  
 Ways for the pasturing kine.

Full-foaming milk-pails, Alpine fare,  
 Sweet heaps of fresh-cut grass,  
 Invite to rest the traveller there  
 Before he climb the pass —

The gentian-flower'd pass, its crown  
 With yellow spires aflame;  
 Whence drops the path to Allière down,  
 And walls where Byron came.<sup>2</sup>

By their green river, who doth change  
 His birth-name just below;  
 Orchard, and croft, and full-stored grange  
 Nursed by his pastoral flow.

<sup>1</sup> Probably all who know the Vevey end of the Lake of Geneva, will recollect Glion, the mountain-village above the castle of Chillon. Glion now has hotels, *pensions*, and villas; but twenty years ago it was hardly more than the huts of Avant opposite to it, — huts through which goes that beautiful path over the Col de Jaman, followed by so many foot-travellers on their way from Vevey to the Simmenthal and Thun. (*Arnold*.)

<sup>2</sup> Montbovon. See Byron's *Journal*, in his *Works*, vol. iii. p. 258. The river Saane becomes the Sarine below Montbovon. (*Arnold*.)

But stop! — to fetch back thoughts that  
 stray  
 Beyond this gracious bound,  
 The cone of Jaman, pale and gray,  
 See, in the blue profound!

Ah, Jaman! delicately tall  
 Above his sun-warm'd firs —  
 What thoughts to me his rocks recall,  
 What memories he stirs!

And who but thou must be, in truth,  
 Obermann! with me here?  
 Thou master of my wandering youth,  
 But left this many a year!

Yes, I forget the world's work wrought,  
 Its warfare waged with pain;  
 An eremite with thee, in thought  
 Once more I slip my chain,

And to thy mountain-chalet come,  
 And lie beside its door,  
 And hear the wild bee's Alpine hum,  
 And thy sad, tranquil lore!

Again I feel the words inspire  
 Their mournful calm; serene,  
 Yet tinged with infinite desire  
 For all that *might* have been —

The harmony from which man swerved  
 Made his life's rule once more!  
 The universal order served,  
 Earth happier than before!

— While thus I mused, night gently  
 ran  
 Down over hill and wood.  
 Then, still and sudden, Obermann  
 On the grass near me stood.

Those pensive features well I knew,  
 On my mind, years before,  
 Imaged so oft! imaged so true!  
 — A shepherd's garb he wore,

A mountain-flower was in his hand,  
 A book was in his breast.  
 Bent on my face, with gaze which scann'd  
 My soul, his eyes did rest.

"And is it thou," he cried, "so long  
 Held by the world which we  
 Loved not, who turnest from the throng  
 Back to thy youth and me?"

"And from thy world, with heart oppress,  
Choosest thou *now* to turn? —  
Ah me! we anchorites read things best,  
Clearest their course discern!

"Thou fledst me when the ungenial earth,  
Man's work-place, lay in gloom.  
Return'st thou in her hour of birth,  
Of hopes and hearts in bloom?

"Perceiv'st thou not the change of day?  
Ah! Carry back thy ken,  
What, some two thousand years! Survey  
The world as it was then!

"Like ours it look'd in outward air.  
Its head was clear and true,  
Sumptuous its clothing, rich its fare,  
No pause its action knew;

"Stout was its arm, each thew and bone  
Seem'd puissant and alive —  
But, ah! its heart, its heart was stone,  
And so it could not thrive!

"On that hard Pagan world disgust  
And secret loathing fell.  
Deep weariness and sated lust  
Made human life a hell.

"In his cool hall, with haggard eyes,  
The Roman noble lay;  
He drove abroad, in furious guise,  
Along the Appian way.

"He made a feast, drank fierce and fast,  
And crown'd his hair with flowers —  
No easier nor no quicker pass'd  
The impracticable hours.

"The brooding East with awe beheld  
Her impious younger world.  
The Roman tempest swell'd and swell'd,  
And on her head was hurl'd.

"The East bow'd low before the blast  
In patient, deep disdain;  
She let the legions thunder past,  
And plunged in thought again.

"So well she mused, a morning broke  
Across her spirit gray;  
A conquering, new-born joy awoke,  
And fill'd her life with day.

"'Poor world,' she cried, 'so deep accurst,  
That runn'st from pole to pole  
To seek a draught to slake thy thirst —  
Go, seek it in thy soul!'

"She heard it, the victorious West,  
In crown and sword array'd!  
She felt the void which mined her breast,  
She shiver'd and obey'd.

"She veil'd her eagles, snapp'd her sword,  
And laid her sceptre down;  
Her stately purple she abhorr'd,  
And her imperial crown.

"She broke her flutes, she stopp'd her  
sports,  
Her artists could not please;  
She tore her books, she shut her courts,  
She fled her palaces;

"Lust of the eye and pride of life  
She left it all behind,  
And hurried, torn with inward strife,  
The wilderness to find.

"Tears wash'd the trouble from her face!  
She changed into a child!  
'Mid weeds and wrecks she stood — a  
place  
Of ruin — but she smiled!

"Oh, had I lived in that great day,  
How had its glory new  
Fill'd earth and heaven, and caught away  
My ravish'd spirit too!

"No thoughts that to the world belong  
Had stood against the wave  
Of love which set so deep and strong  
From Christ's then open grave.

"No cloister-floor of humid stone  
Had been too cold for me.  
For me no Eastern desert lone  
Had been too far to flee.

"No lonely life had pass'd too slow,  
When I could hourly scan  
Upon his Cross, with head sunk low,  
That nail'd, thorn-crowned Man!

"Could see the Mother with her Child  
Whose tender winning arts  
Have to his little arms beguiled  
So many wounded hearts!

"And centuries came and ran their course,  
And unspent all that time  
Still, still went forth that Child's dear  
force,  
And still was at its prime.

"Ay, ages long endured his span  
Of life — 'tis true received —  
That gracious Child, that thorn-crown'd  
Man!  
— He lived while we believed.

"While we believed, on earth he went,  
And open stood his grave.  
Men call'd from chamber, chùrch, and  
tent;  
And Christ was by to save.

"Now he is dead! Far hence he lies  
In the lorn Syrian town;  
And on his grave, with shining eyes,  
The Syrian stars look down.

"In vain men still, with hoping new,  
Regard his death-place dumb,  
And say the stone is not yet to,  
And wait for words to come.

"Ah, o'er that silent sacred land,  
Of sun, and arid stone,  
And crumbling wall, and sultry sand,  
Sounds now one word alone!

*"Unduped of fancy, henceforth man  
Must labor! — must resign  
His all too human creeds and scan  
Simply the way divine!*

"But slow that tide of common thought,  
Which bathed our life, retired;  
Slow, slow the old world wore to nought,  
And pulse by pulse expired.

"Its frame yet stood without a breach  
When blood and warmth were fled;  
And still it spake its wonted speech —  
But every word was dead.

"And oh, we cried, that on this corse  
Might fall a freshening storm!  
Rive its dry bones, and with new force  
A new-sprung world inform!

"— Down came the storm! O'er France  
it pass'd  
In sheets of scathing fire;  
All Europe felt that fiery blast,  
And shook as it rush'd by her.

"Down came the storm! In ruins fell  
The worn-out world we knew.  
— It pass'd, that elemental swell!  
Again appear'd the blue;

"The sun shone in the new-wash'd sky,  
And what from heaven saw he?  
Blocks of the past, like icebergs high,  
Float on a rolling sea!

"Upon them plies the race of man  
All it before endeavor'd;  
'Ye live,' I cried, 'ye work and plan,  
And know not ye are sever'd!

"'Poor fragments of a broken world  
Whereon men pitch their tent!  
Why were ye too to death not hurl'd  
When your world's day was spent?

"That glow of central fire is done  
Which with its fusing flame  
Knit all your parts, and kept you  
one —  
But ye, ye are the same!

"The past, its mask of union on,  
Had ceased to live and thrive.  
The past, its mask of union gone,  
Say, is it more alive?

"Your creeds are dead, your rites are  
dead,  
Your social order too!  
Where tarries he, the Power who said:  
*See, I make all things new?*

"The millions suffer still, and grieve,  
And what can helpers heal  
With old-world cures men half believe  
For woes they wholly feel?

"And yet men have such need of joy!  
But joy whose grounds are true;  
And joy that should all hearts employ  
As when the past was new.

"Ah, not the emotion of that past,  
Its common hope, were vain!  
Some new such hope must dawn at last,  
Or man must toss in pain.

"But now the old is out of date,  
The new is not yet born,  
And who can be *alone* elate,  
While the world lies forlorn?"



"Then to the wilderness I fled. —  
There among Alpine snows  
And pastoral huts I hid my head,  
And sought and found repose.

"It was not yet the appointed hour.  
Sad, patient, and resign'd,  
I watch'd the crocus fade and flower,  
I felt the sun and wind.

"The day I lived in was not mine,  
Man gets no second day.  
In dreams I saw the future shine —  
But ah! I could not stay!

"Action I had not, followers, fame;  
I pass'd obscure, alone.  
The after-world forgets my name,  
Nor do I wish it known.

"Composed to bear, I lived and died,  
And knew my life was vain,  
With fate I murmur not, nor chide.  
At Sèvres by the Seine

"(If Paris that brief flight allow)  
My humble tomb explore!  
It bears: *Eternity, be thou*  
*My refuge!* and no more.

"But thou, whom fellowship of mood  
Did make from haunts of strife  
Come to my mountain-solitude,  
And learn my frustrate life;

"O thou, who, ere thy flying span  
Was past of cheerful youth,  
Didst find the solitary man  
And love his cheerless truth —

"Despair not thou as I despair'd,  
Nor be cold gloom thy prison!  
Forward the gracious hours have fared,  
And see! the sun is risen!

"He breaks the winter of the past;  
A green, new earth appears.  
Millions, whose life in ice lay fast,  
Have thoughts, and smiles, and tears.

"What though there still need effort,  
strife?  
Though much be still unwon?  
Yet warm it mounts, the hour of life!  
Death's frozen hour is done!

"The world's great order dawns in  
sheen,  
After long darkness rude,  
Divinelier image, clearer seen,  
With happier zeal pursued.

"With hope extinct and brow composed  
I mark'd the present die;  
Its term of life was nearly closed,  
Yet it had more than I.

"But thou, though to the world's new  
hour  
Thou come with aspect marr'd,  
Shorn of the joy, the bloom, the power  
Which best befits its bard —

"Though more than half thy years be  
past,  
And spent thy youthful prime;  
Though, round thy firmer manhood  
cast  
Hang weeds of our sad time

"Whereof thy youth felt all the spell,  
And traversed all the shade —  
Though late, though dimm'd, though  
weak, yet tell  
Hope to a world new-made!

"Help it to fill that deep desire,  
The want which rack'd our brain,  
Consumed our heart with thirst like  
fire,  
Immedicable pain;

"Which to the wilderness drove out  
Our life, to Alpine snow,  
And palsied all our word with doubt,  
And all our work with woe —

"What still of strength is left, employ,  
This end to help attain:  
*One common wave of thought and joy*  
*Lifting mankind again!"*

— The vision ended. I awoke  
As out of sleep, and no  
Voice moved; — only the torrent broke  
The silence, far below.

Soft darkness on the turf did lie.  
Solemn, o'er hut and wood,  
In the yet star-sown nightly sky,  
The peak of Jaman stood.

Still in my soul the voice I heard  
Of Obermann! — away  
I turn'd; by some vague impulse stirr'd,  
Along the rocks of Naye

Past Sonchaud's piny flanks I gaze  
And the blanch'd summit bare  
Of Malatrait, to where in haze  
The Valais opens fair,

And the domed Velan, with his snows,  
Behind the upcrowding hills,  
Doth all the heavenly opening close  
Which the Rhone's murmur fills; —

And glorious there, without a sound,  
Across the glimmering lake,  
High in the Valais-depth profound,  
I saw the morning break. 1867.

# DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI

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# DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI

## MY SISTER'S SLEEP

SHE fell asleep on Christmas Eve :  
At length the long-ungranted shade  
Of weary eyelids overweigh'd  
The pain nought else might yet relieve.

Our mother, who had leaned all day  
Over the bed from chime to chime,  
Then raised herself for the first time,  
And as she sat her down, did pray.

Her little work-table was spread  
With work to finish. For the glare  
Made by her candle, she had care  
To work some distance from the bed.

Without, there was a cold moon up,  
Of winter radiance sheer and thin ;  
The hollow halo it was in  
Was like an icy crystal cup.

Through the small room, with subtle  
sound  
Of flame, by vents the fireshine drove  
And reddened. In its dim alcove  
The mirror shed a clearness round.

I had been sitting up some nights,  
And my tired mind felt weak and  
blank ;  
Like a sharp strengthening wine it  
drank  
The stillness and the broken lights.

Twelve struck. That sound, by dwind-  
ling years  
Heard in each hour, crept off ; and  
then  
The ruffled silence spread again,  
Like water that a pebble stirs.

Our mother rose from where she sat :  
Her needles, as she laid them down,  
Met lightly, and her silken gown  
Settled : no other noise than that.

"Glory unto the Newly Born !"  
So, as said angels, she did say ;  
Because we were in Christmas Day,  
Though it would still be long till morn.

Just then in the room over us  
There was a pushing back of chairs,  
As some who had sat unawares  
So late, now heard the hour, and rose.

With anxious softly-stepping haste  
Our mother went where Margaret lay,  
Fearing the sounds o'erhead — should  
they  
Have broken her long watched-for rest !

She stooped an instant, calm, and turned ;  
But suddenly turned back again ;  
And all her features seemed in pain  
With woe, and her eyes gazed and  
yearned.

For my part, I but hid my face,  
And held my breath, and spoke no word :  
There was none spoken ; but I heard  
The silence for a little space.

Our mother bowed herself and wept :  
And both my arms fell, and I said,  
"God knows I knew that she was  
dead."  
And there, all white, my sister slept.

Then kneeling, upon Christmas morn  
A little after twelve o'clock  
We said, ere the first quarter struck,  
"Christ's blessing on the newly born !"  
1847. 1850.

## THE BLESSED DAMOZEL

THE blessed damozel leaned out  
From the gold bar of Heaven ;  
Her eyes were deeper than the depth  
Of waters stilled at even ;  
She had three lilies in her hand,  
And the stars in her hair were seven.



Her robe, ungirt from clasp to hem,  
 No wrought flowers did adorn,  
 But a white rose of Mary's gift,  
 For service meetly worn;  
 Her hair that lay along her back  
 Was yellow like ripe corn.

Her seemed she scarce had been a day  
 One of God's choristers;  
 The wonder was not yet quite gone  
 From that still look of hers;  
 Albeit, to them she left, her day  
 Had counted as ten years.

(To one, it is ten years of years.  
 . . . Yet now, and in this place,  
 Surely she leaned o'er me — her hair  
 Fell all about my face. . . .  
 Nothing: the autumn fall of leaves.  
 The whole year sets apace.)

It was the rampart of God's house  
 That she was standing on;  
 By God built over the sheer depth  
 The which is Space begun;  
 So high, that looking downward thence  
 She scarce could see the sun.

It lies in Heaven, across the flood  
 Of ether, as a bridge.  
 Beneath the tides of day and night  
 With flame and darkness ridge  
 The void, as low as where this earth  
 Spins like a fretful midge.

Around her, lovers, newly met  
 'Mid deathless love's acclaims,  
 Spoke evermore among themselves  
 Their heart-remembered names;  
 And the souls mounting up to God  
 Went by her like thin flames.

And still she bowed herself and stooped  
 Out of the circling charm;  
 Until her bosom must have made  
 The bar she leaned on warm  
 And the lilies lay as if asleep  
 Along her bended arm.

From the fixed place of Heaven she saw  
 Time like a pulse shake fierce  
 Through all the worlds. Her gaze still  
 strove  
 Within the gulf to pierce  
 Its path; and now she spoke as when  
 The stars sang in their spheres.

The sun was gone now; the curled moon  
 Was like a little feather  
 Fluttering far down the gulf; and now  
 She spoke through the still weather.  
 Her voice was like the voice the stars  
 Had when they sang together.

(Ah sweet! Even now, in that bird's song,  
 Strove not her accents there,  
 Fain to be harkened? When those bells  
 Possessed the mid-day air,  
 Strove not her steps to reach my side  
 Down all the echoing stair?)

"I wish that he were come to me,  
 For he will come," she said.  
 "Have I not prayed in Heaven? — on  
 earth,  
 Lord, Lord, has he not pray'd?  
 Are not two prayers a perfect strength?  
 And shall I feel afraid?"

"When round his head the aureole clings,  
 And he is clothed in white,  
 I'll take his hand and go with him  
 To the deep wells of light;  
 As unto a stream we will step down,  
 And bathe there in God's sight.

"We two will stand beside that shrine,  
 Occult, withheld, untrod,  
 Whose lamps are stirred continually  
 With prayer sent up to God;  
 And see our old prayers, granted, melt  
 Each like a little cloud.

"We two will lie i' the shadow of  
 That living mystic tree  
 Within whose secret growth the Dove  
 Is sometimes felt to be,  
 While every leaf that His plumes touch  
 Saith His Name audibly.

"And I myself will teach to him,  
 I myself, lying so,  
 The songs I sing here; which his voice  
 Shall pause in, hushed and slow.  
 And find some knowledge at each pause,  
 Or some new thing to know."

(Alas! We two, we two, thou say'st!  
 Yea, one wast thou with me  
 That once of old. But shall God lift  
 To endless unity  
 The soul whose likeness with thy soul  
 Was but its love for thee?)

"We two," she said, "will seek the groves  
Where the lady Mary is,  
With her five handmaidens whose names  
Are five sweet symphonies,  
Cecily, Gertrude, Magdalen,  
Margaret and Rosalys.

"Circlewise sit they, with bound locks  
And foreheads garlanded;  
Into the fine cloth white like flame  
Weaving the golden thread,  
To fashion the birth-robcs for them  
Who are just born, being dead.

"He shall fear, haply, and be dumb:  
Then will I lay my cheek  
To his, and tell about our love,  
Not once abashed or weak:  
And the dear Mother will approve  
My pride, and let me speak.

"Herself shall bring us, hand in hand,  
To Him round whom all souls  
Kneel, the clear-ranged unnumbered heads  
Bowed with their aureoles:  
And angels meeting us shall sing  
To their citherns and citoles.

"There will I ask of Christ the Lord  
Thus much for him and me: —  
Only to live as once on earth  
With Love, only to be,  
As then awhile, for ever now,  
Together, I and he."

She gazed and listened and then said,  
Less sad of speech than mild, —  
"All this is when he comes." She ceased.  
The light thrilled towards her, fill'd  
With angels in strong level flight.  
Her eyes prayed, and she smil'd.

(I saw her smile.) But soon their path  
Was vague in distant spheres:  
And then she cast her arms along  
The golden barriers,  
And laid her face between her hands,  
And wept. (I heard her tears.)

1847. 1850.

### AUTUMN SONG

KNOW'ST thou not at the fall of the leaf  
How the heart feels a languid grief  
Laid on it for a covering;  
And how sleep seems a goodly thing  
In Autumn at the fall of the leaf?

And how the swift beat of the brain  
Falters because it is in vain,  
In Autumn at the fall of the leaf  
Knowest thou not? and how the chief  
Of joys seems — not to suffer pain?

Know'st thou not at the fall of the leaf  
How the soul feels like a dried sheaf  
Bound up at length for harvesting,  
And how death seems a comely thing  
In Autumn at the fall of the leaf?

1884.<sup>1</sup>

### THE PORTRAIT

THIS is her picture as she was:  
It seems a thing to wonder on,  
As though mine image in the glass  
Should tarry when myself am gone.  
I gaze until she seems to stir, —  
Until mine eyes almost aver  
That now, even now, the sweet lips part  
To breathe the words of the sweet  
heart: —  
And yet the earth is over her.

Alas! even such the thin-drawn ray  
That makes the prison-depths more  
rude, —  
The drip of water night and day  
Giving a tongue to solitude.  
Yet only this, of love's whole prize,  
Remains; save what in mournful guise  
Takes counsel with my soul alone, —  
Save what is secret and unknown,  
Below the earth, above the skies.

In painting her I shrined her face  
'Mid mystic trees, where light falls in  
Hardly at all; a covert place  
Where you might think to find a din  
Of doubtful talk, and a live flame  
Wandering, and many a shape whose  
name  
Not itself knoweth, and old dew,  
And your own footsteps meeting you,  
And all things going as they came.

A deep dim wood; and there she stands  
As in that wood that day: for so  
Was the still movement of her hands  
And such the pure line's gracious flow.

<sup>1</sup> W. M. Rossetti classes this among the earliest poems, in date of writing. It was published as a song in 1884, and in the *Poetical Works*, 1886.

And passing fair the type must seem,  
 Unknown the presence and the dream.  
 'Tis she : though of herself, alas !  
 Less than her shadow on the grass  
 Or than her image in the stream.

That day we met there, I and she  
 One with the other all alone ;  
 And we were blithe ; yet memory  
 Saddens those hours, as when the  
     moon  
 Looks upon daylight. And with her  
 I stooped to drink the spring-water,  
 Athirst where other waters sprang ;  
 And where the echo is, she sang, —  
 My soul another echo there.

But when that hour my soul won strength  
 For words whose silence wastes and  
     kills,  
 Dull raindrops smote us, and at length  
 Thundered the heat within the hills.  
 That eve I spoke those words again  
 Beside the pelted window-pane ;  
 And there she harkened what I said,  
 With under-glances that surveyed  
 The empty pastures blind with rain.

Next day the memories of these things,  
 Like leaves through which a bird has  
     flown,  
 Still vibrated with Love's warm wings ;  
 Till I must make them all my own  
 And paint this picture. So, 'twixt ease  
 Of talk and sweet long silences,  
 She stood among the plants in bloom  
 At windows of a summer room,  
 To feign the shadow of the trees.

And as I wrought, while all above  
 And all around was fragrant air,  
 In the sick burthen of my love  
 It seemed each sun-thrilled blossom  
     there  
 Beat like a heart among the leaves.  
 O heart that never beats nor heaves,  
 In that one darkness lying still,  
 What now to thee my love's great will,  
 Or the fine web the sunshine weaves ?

For now doth daylight disavow  
 Those days, — nought left to see or  
     hear.  
 Only in solemn whispers now  
 At night-time these things reach mine  
     ear,

When the leaf-shadows at a breath  
 Shrink in the road, and all the heath,  
 Forest and water, far and wide,  
 In limpid starlight glorified,  
 Lie like the mystery of death.

Last night at last I could have slept,  
 And yet delayed my sleep till dawn,  
 Still wandering. Then it was I wept :  
 For unawares I came upon  
 Those glades where once she walked  
     with me :  
 And as I stood there suddenly,  
 All wan with traversing the night,  
 Upon the desolate verge of light  
 Yearned loud the iron-bosomed sea.

Even so, where Heaven holds breath and  
     hears  
 The beating heart of Love's own  
     breast, —  
 Where round the secret of all spheres  
 All angels lay their wings to rest, —  
 How shall my soul stand rapt and  
     awed,  
 When, by the new birth borne abroad  
 Throughout the music of the suns,  
 It enters in her soul at once  
 And knows the silence there for God !

Here with her face doth memory sit  
 Meanwhile, and wait the day's decline,  
 Till other eyes shall look from it,  
 Eyes of the spirit's Palestine,  
 Even than the old gaze tenderer :  
 While hopes and aims long lost with  
     her ;  
 Stand round her image side by side,  
 Like tombs of pilgrims that have died  
 About the Holy Sepulchre.

1847. 1870.

#### THE CARD-DEALER

COULD you not drink her gaze like wine ?  
 Yet though its splendor swoon  
 Into the silence languidly  
 As a tune into a tune,  
 Those eyes unravel the coiled night  
 And know the stars at noon.

The gold that's heaped beside her hand,  
 In truth rich prize it were ;  
 And rich the dreams that wreath her  
     brows

With magic stillness there;  
And he were rich who should unwind  
That woven golden hair.

Around her, where she sits, the dance  
Now breathes its eager heat;  
And not more lightly or more true  
Fall there the dancers' feet  
Than fall her cards on the bright board  
As 'twere an heart that beat.

Her fingers let them softly through,  
Smooth polished silent things;  
And each one as it falls reflects  
In swift light-shadowings,  
Blood-red and purple, green and blue,  
The great eyes of her rings.

Whom plays she with? With thee, who  
lov'st  
Those gems upon her hand;  
With me, who search her secret brows;  
With all men, bless'd or bann'd.  
We play together, she and we.  
Within a vain strange land:

A land without any order, —  
Day even as night, (one saith,) —  
Where who lieth down ariseth not  
Nor the sleeper awakeneth;  
A land of darkness as darkness itself  
And of the shadow of death.

What be her cards, you ask? Even  
these: —  
The heart, that doth but crave  
More, having fed; the diamond,  
Skilled to make base seem brave;  
The club, for smiting in the dark;  
The spade, to dig a grave.

And do you ask what game she plays?  
With me 'tis lost or won;  
With thee it is playing still; with him  
It is not well begun;  
But 'tis a game she plays with all  
Beneath the sway o' the sun.

Thou seest the card that falls, she knows  
The card that followeth:  
Her game in thy tongue is called Life,  
As ebbs thy daily breath:  
When she shall speak, thou'lt learn her  
tongue  
And know she calls it Death. 1870.

## AT THE SUNRISE IN 1848

God said, Let there be light! and there  
was light.  
Then heard we sounds as though the  
Earth did sing  
And the Earth's angel cried upon the  
wing:  
We saw priests fall together and turn  
white:  
And covered in the dust from the sun's  
sight,  
A king was spied, and yet another king.  
We said: "The round world keeps its  
balancing;  
On this globe, they and we are opposite, —  
If it is day with us, with them 'tis night.  
Still, Man, in thy just pride, remember  
this:  
Thou hadst not made that thy sons'  
sons shall ask  
What the word *king* may mean in their  
day's task,  
But for the light that led: and if light is,  
It is because God said, Let there be  
light." 1848. 1886.

ON REFUSAL OF AID BETWEEN  
NATIONS

NOT that the earth is changing, O my  
God!  
Nor that the seasons totter in their  
walk, —  
Not that the virulent ill of act and  
talk  
Seethes ever as a winepress ever trod, —  
Not therefore are we certain that the  
rod  
Weighs in thine hand to smite thy world;  
though now  
Beneath thine hand so many nations  
bow,  
So many kings: — not therefore, O my  
God! —  
But because Man is parcelled out in  
men  
To-day; because, for any wrongful blow,  
No man not stricken asks, "I would be  
told  
Why thou dost thus;" but his heart  
whispers then,  
"He is he, I am I." By this we know.  
That the earth falls asunder, being old.  
1848 or 1849. 1870.

## MARY'S GIRLHOOD

*(For a Picture)*

## I

THIS is that blessed Mary, pre-elect  
 God's Virgin. Gone is a great while, and  
 she  
 Dwelt young in Nazareth of Galilee.  
 Unto God's will she brought devout  
 respect,  
 Profound simplicity of intellect,  
 And supreme patience. From her  
 mother's knee  
 Faithful and hopeful; wise in charity;  
 Strong in grave peace; in pity circum-  
 spect.  
 So held she through her girlhood; as it  
 were  
 An angel-watered lily, that near God  
 Grows and is quiet. Till, one dawn at  
 home  
 She woke in her white bed, and had no  
 fear  
 At all, — yet wept till sunshine, and felt  
 awed:  
 Because the fulness of the time was come.

## II

THESE are the symbols. On that cloth of  
 red  
 I' the centre is the Tripoint: perfect  
 each,  
 Except the second of its points, to  
 teach  
 That Christ is not yet born. The books  
 — whose head  
 Is golden Charity, as Paul hath said —  
 Those virtues are wherein the soul is  
 rich:  
 Therefore on them the lily standeth,  
 which  
 Is Innocence, being interpreted.  
 The seven-thorn'd briar and the palm  
 seven-leaved  
 Are her great sorrow and her great re-  
 ward.  
 Until the end be full, the Holy One  
 Abides without. She soon shall have  
 achieved  
 Her perfect purity: yea, God to the  
 Lord  
 Shall soon vouchsafe His Son to be her  
 Son.

1848, 1850. 1849, 1870.

## FOR A VENETIAN PASTORAL

BY GIORGIONE

*(In the Louvre)*

WATER, for anguish of the solstice: —  
 nay,  
 But dip the vessel, slowly, — nay, but  
 lean  
 And hark how at its verge the wave sighs  
 in  
 Reluctant. Hush! Beyond all depth  
 away  
 The heat lies silent at the brink of day:  
 Now the hand trails upon the viol-string  
 That sobs, and the brown faces cease to  
 sing,  
 Sad with the whole of pleasure. Whither  
 stray  
 Her eyes now, from whose mouth the slim  
 pipes creep  
 And leave it pouting, while the shadowed  
 grass  
 Is cool against her naked side? Let  
 be: —  
 Say nothing now unto her lest she weep,  
 Nor name this ever. Be it as it was, —  
 Life touching lips with Immortality.  
 1850.

## THE SEA-LIMITS

CONSIDER the sea's listless chime:  
 Time's self it is, made audible, —  
 The murmur of the earth's own shell.  
 Secret continuance sublime  
 Is the sea's end: our sight may pass  
 No furlong further. Since time was,  
 This sound hath told the lapse of time.  
 No quiet, which is death's, — it hath  
 The mournfulness of ancient life,  
 Enduring always at dull strife,  
 As the world's heart of rest and wrath,  
 Its painful pulse is in the sands.  
 Last utterly, the whole sky stands,  
 Gray and not known, along its path.  
 Listen alone beside the sea,  
 Listen alone among the woods;  
 Those voices of twin solitudes  
 Shall have one sound alike to thee:  
 Hark where the murmurs of thronged  
 men  
 Surge and sink back and surge again, —  
 Still the one voice of wave and tree.



Gather a shell from the strown beach  
 And listen at its lips: they sigh  
 The same desire and mystery,  
 The echo of the whole sea's speech.  
 And all mankind is thus at heart  
 Not anything but what thou art:  
 And Earth, Sea, Man, are all in each.  
 r850.

## SISTER HELEN

"Why did you melt your waxen man,  
 Sister Helen?  
 To-day is the third since you began."  
 "The time was long, yet the time ran,  
 Little brother."  
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
 Three days to-day, between Hell and  
 Heaven!)*

"But if you have done your work aright,  
 Sister Helen,  
 You'll let me play, for you said I might."  
 "Be very still in your play to-night,  
 Little brother."  
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
 Third night, to-night, between Hell and  
 Heaven!)*

"You said it must melt ere vesper-bell,  
 Sister Helen;  
 If now it be molten, all is well."  
 "Even so, — nay, peace! you cannot tell,  
 Little brother."  
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
 O what is this, between Hell and Heaven?)*

"Oh the waxen knave was plump to-day,  
 Sister Helen;  
 How like dead folk he has dropped  
 away!"  
 "Nay now, of the dead what can you say,  
 Little brother?"  
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
 What of the dead, between Hell and  
 Heaven?)*

"See, see, the sunken pile of wood,  
 Sister Helen,  
 Shines through the thinned wax red as  
 blood!"  
 "Nay now, when looked you yet on  
 blood,  
 Little brother?"  
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
 How pale she is, between Hell and Heaven!)*

"Now close your eyes, for they're sick  
 and sore,  
 Sister Helen,  
 And I'll play without the gallery door."  
 "Aye, let me rest, — I'll lie on the floor,  
 Little brother."  
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
 What rest to-night, between Hell and  
 Heaven?)*

"Here high up in the balcony,  
 Sister Helen,  
 The moon flies face to face with me."  
 "Aye, look and say whatever you see,  
 Little brother."  
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
 What sight to-night, between Hell and  
 Heaven?)*

"Outside it's merry in the wind's wake,  
 Sister Helen;  
 In the shaken trees the chill stars shake."  
 "Hush, heard you a horse tread as you  
 spake,  
 Little brother?"  
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
 What sound to-night, between Hell and  
 Heaven?)*

"I hear a horse-tread, and I see,  
 Sister Helen,  
 Three horsemen that ride terribly."  
 "Little brother, whence come the three,  
 Little brother?"  
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
 Whence should they come, between Hell and  
 Heaven?)*

"They come by the hill-verge from  
 Boyne Bar,  
 Sister Helen,  
 And one draws nigh, but two are afar."  
 "Look, look, do you know them who  
 they are,  
 Little brother?"  
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
 Who should they be, between Hell and  
 Heaven?)*

"Oh, it's Keith of Eastholm rides so fast,  
 Sister Helen,  
 For I know the white mane on the blast."  
 "The hour has come, has come at last,  
 Little brother!"  
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
 Her hour at last, between Hell and Heaven!)*

"He has made a sign and called Halloo!  
     Sister Helen,  
 And he says that he would speak with  
     you."

"O tell him I fear the frozen dew,  
     Little brother."  
     (O Mother, Mary Mother,  
*Why laughs she thus, between Hell and Heaven!*)

"The wind is loud, but I hear him cry,  
     Sister Helen,  
 That Keith of Ewern's like to die."  
 "And he and thou, and thou and I,  
     Little brother."  
     (O Mother, Mary Mother,  
*And they and we, between Hell and Heaven!*)

"Three days ago, on his marriage-morn,  
     Sister Helen,  
 He sickened and lies since then forlorn."  
 "For bridegroom's side is the bride a  
     thorn,  
     Little brother?"  
     (O Mother, Mary Mother,  
*Cold bridal cheer, between Hell and Heaven!*)

"Three days and nights he has lain abed,  
     Sister Helen,  
 And he prays in torment to be dead."  
 "The thing may chance, if he have  
     prayed,  
     Little brother!"  
     (O Mother, Mary Mother,  
*If he have prayed, between Hell and Heaven!*)

"But he has not ceased to cry to-day,  
     Sister Helen,  
 That you should take your curse away."  
 "My prayer was heard, — he need but  
     pray,  
     Little brother!"  
     (O Mother, Mary Mother,  
*Shall God not hear, between Hell and Heaven?*)

"But he says, till you take back your ban,  
     Sister Helen,  
 His soul would pass, yet never can."  
 "Nay then, shall I slay a living man,  
     Little brother?"  
     (O Mother, Mary Mother,  
*A living soul, between Hell and Heaven!*)

"But he calls for ever on your name,  
     Sister Helen,  
 And says that he melts before a flame."  
 "My heart for his pleasure fared the same,  
     Little brother."  
     (O Mother, Mary Mother,  
*Fire at the heart, between Hell and Heaven!*)

"Here's Keith of Westholm riding fast,  
     Sister Helen,  
 For I know the white plume on the blast."  
 "The hour, the sweet hour I forecast,  
     Little brother!"  
     (O Mother, Mary Mother,  
*Is the hour sweet, between Hell and Heaven?*)

"He stops to speak, and he stills his  
     horse,  
     Sister Helen;  
 But his words are drowned in the wind's  
     course."  
 "Nay hear, nay hear, you must hear  
     perforce,  
     Little brother!"  
     (O Mother, Mary Mother,  
*What word now heard, between Hell and Heaven?*)

"Oh he says that Keith of Ewern's cry,  
     Sister Helen,  
 Is ever to see you ere he die."  
 "In all that his soul sees, there am I,  
     Little brother!"  
     (O Mother, Mary Mother,  
*The soul's one sight, between Hell and Heaven!*)

"He sends a ring and a broken coin,  
     Sister Helen,  
 And bids you mind the banks of Boyne."  
 "What else he broke will he ever join,  
     Little brother?"  
     (O Mother, Mary Mother,  
*No, never joined, between Hell and Heaven!*)

"He yields you these and craves full fain,  
     Sister Helen,  
 You pardon him in his mortal pain."  
 "What else he took will he give again,  
     Little brother?"  
     (O Mother, Mary Mother,  
*Not twice to give, between Hell and Heaven!*)

"He calls your name in an agony,  
     Sister Helen,  
 That even dead Love must weep to see."

"Hate, born of Love, is blind as he,  
 Little brother!"  
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
 Love turned to hate, between Hell and  
 Heaven!)*

"Oh it's Keith of Keith now that rides  
 fast,  
 Sister Helen,  
 For I know the white hair on the blast."  
 "The short, short hour will soon be past,  
 Little brother!"  
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
 Will soon be past, between Hell and  
 Heaven!)*

"He looks at me and he tries to speak,  
 Sister Helen,  
 But oh! his voice is sad and weak!"  
 "What here should the mighty Baron  
 seek,  
 Little brother?"  
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
 Is this the end, between Hell and Heaven?)*

"Oh his son still cries, if you forgive,  
 Sister Helen,  
 The body dies, but the soul shall live."  
 "Fire shall forgive me as I forgive,  
 Little brother!"  
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
 As she forgives, between Hell and  
 Heaven!)*

"Oh he prays you, as his heart would  
 rive,  
 Sister Helen,  
 To save his dear son's soul alive."  
 "Fire cannot slay it, it shall thrive,  
 Little brother!"  
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
 Alas, alas, between Hell and Heaven!)*

"He cries to you, kneeling in the road,  
 Sister Helen,  
 To go with him for the love of God!"  
 "The way is long to his son's abode,  
 Little brother."  
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
 The way is long, between Hell and Heaven!)*

"A lady's here, by a dark steed brought,  
 Sister Helen,  
 So darkly clad, I saw her not."  
 "See her now or never see aught,  
 Little brother!"

*(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
 What more to see, between Hell and  
 Heaven?)*

"Her hood falls back, and the moon  
 shines fair,  
 Sister Helen,  
 On the Lady of Ewern's golden hair."  
 "Blest hour of my power and her despair,  
 Little brother!"  
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
 Hour blest and bann'd, between Hell and  
 Heaven!)*

"Pale, pale her cheeks, that in pride did  
 glow,

Sister Helen,  
 'Neath the bridal-wreath three days ago."  
 "One morn for pride and three days for  
 woe.

Little brother!"  
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
 Three days, three nights, between Hell and  
 Heaven!)*

"Her clasped hands stretch from her  
 bending head,  
 Sister Helen;  
 With the loud wind's wail her sobs are  
 wed."  
 "What wedding-strains hath her bridal-  
 bed,

Little brother?"  
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
 What strain but death's, between Hell and  
 Heaven?)*

"She may not speak, she sinks in a swoon,  
 Sister Helen,  
 She lifts her lips and gasps on the moon."  
 "Oh! might I but hear her soul's blithe  
 tune,

Little brother!"  
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
 Her woe's dumb cry, between Hell and  
 Heaven!)*

"They've caught her to Westholm's  
 saddle-bow,  
 Sister Helen,  
 And her moonlit hair gleams white in its  
 flow."

"Let it turn whiter than winter snow,  
 Little brother!"  
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,  
 Woe-withered gold, between Hell and  
 Heaven!)*

"O Sister Helen, you heard the bell,  
Sister Helen!  
More loud than the vesper-chime it  
fell."

"No vesper-chime, but a dying knell,  
Little brother!"  
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*  
*His dying knell, between Hell and*  
*Heaven!)*

"Alas! but I fear the heavy sound,  
Sister Helen;  
Is it in the sky or in the ground?"  
"Say, have they turned their horses  
round,

Little brother?"  
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*  
*What would she more, between Hell and*  
*Heaven?)*

"They have raised the old man from his  
knee,

Sister Helen,  
And they ride in silence hastily."  
"More fast the naked soul doth flee,  
Little brother!"  
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*  
*The naked soul, between Hell and Heaven!)*

"Flank to flank are the three steeds  
gone,

Sister Helen,  
But the lady's dark steed goes alone."  
"And lonely her bridegroom's soul hath  
flown,

Little brother."  
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*  
*The lonely ghost, between Hell and Heaven!)*

"Oh the wind is sad in the iron chill,  
Sister Helen,  
And weary sad they look by the hill."

"But he and I are sadder still,  
Little brother!"  
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*  
*Most sad of all, between Hell and Heaven!)*

"See, see, the wax has dropped from its  
place,

Sister Helen,  
And the flames are winning up apace!"  
"Yet here they burn but for a space,  
Little brother!"  
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*  
*Here for a space, between Hell and Heaven!)*

"Ah! what white thing at the door has  
cross'd,

Sister Helen?  
Ah! what is this that sighs in the frost?"  
"A soul that's lost as mine is lost,  
Little brother!"

(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*  
*Lost, lost, all lost, between Hell and*  
*Heaven!)* 1853, 1870.

## THE BURDEN OF NINEVEH

IN our Museum galleries  
To-day I lingered o'er the prize  
Dead Greece vouchsafes to living eyes, —  
Her Art for ever in fresh wise  
From hour to hour rejoicing me.  
Sighing I turned at last to win  
Once more the London dirt and din;  
And as I made the swing-door spin  
And issued, they were hoisting in  
A winged beast from Nineveh.

A human face the creature wore,  
And hoofs behind and hoofs before,  
And flanks with dark runes fretted o'er,  
'Twas bull, 'twas mitred Minotaur,  
A dead disbowelled mystery;  
The mummy of a buried faith  
Stark from the charnel without scathe,  
Its wings stood for the light to bathe, —  
Such fossil cerements as might swathe  
The very corpse of Nineveh.

The print of its first rush-wrapping,  
Wound ere it dried, still ribbed the thing.  
What song did the brown maidens sing,  
From purple mouths alternating,  
When that was woven languidly?  
What vows, what rites, what prayers  
preffer'd,  
What songs has the strange image heard?  
In what blind vigil stood interr'd  
For ages, till an English word  
Broke silence first at Nineveh?

Oh when upon each sculptured court,  
Where even the wind might not resort, —  
O'er which Time passed, of like import  
With the wild Arab boys at sport, —  
A living face looked in to see: —  
Oh seemed it not—the spell once broke—  
As though the carven warriors woke,  
As though the shaft the string forsook,  
The cymbals clashed, the chariots shook,  
And there was life in Nineveh?

On London stones our sun anew  
 The beast's recovered shadow threw.  
 (No shade that plague of darkness knew,  
 No light, no shade, while older grew  
   By ages the old earth and sea.)  
 Lo thou! could all thy priests have shown  
 Such proof to make thy godhead known?  
 From their dead Past thou liv'st alone  
 And still thy shadow is thine own  
   Even as of yore in Nineveh.

That day whereof we keep record,  
 When near thy city-gates the Lord  
 Sheltered his Jonah with a gourd,  
 This sun, (I said) here present, pour'd  
   Even thus this shadow that I see.  
 This shadow has been shed the same  
 From sun and moon, — from lamps which  
   came  
 For prayer, — from fifteen days of flame,  
 The last, while smouldered to a name  
   Sardanapalus' Nineveh.

Within thy shadow, haply, once  
 Sennacherib has knelt, whose sons  
 Smote him between the altar-stones:  
 Or pale Semiramis her zones  
   Of gold, her incense brought to thee,  
 In love for grace, in war for aid: . . .  
 Ay, and who else? . . . till 'neath thy  
   shade  
 Within his trenches newly made  
 Last year the Christian knelt and  
   pray'd —  
   Not to thy strength — in Nineveh.

Now, thou poor god, within this hall  
 Where the blank windows blind the wall  
 From pedestal to pedestal,  
 The kind of light shall on thee fall  
   Which London takes the day to be:  
 While school-foundations in the act  
 Of holiday, three files compact,  
 Shall learn to view thee as a fact  
 Connected with that zealous tract:  
   "Rome, — Babylon and Nineveh."

Deemed they of this, those worshippers,  
 When, in some mythic chain of verse  
 Which man shall not again rehearse,  
 The faces of thy ministers  
   Yearned pale with bitter ecstasy?  
 Greece, Egypt, Rome, — did any god  
 Before whose feet men knelt unshod  
 Deem that in this unblest abode  
 Another scarce more unknown god  
   Should house with him, from Nineveh?

Ah! in what quarries lay the stone  
 From which this pygmy pile has grown,  
 Unto man's need how long unknown,  
 Since thy vast temples, court and cone,  
   Rose far in desert history?  
 Ah! what is here that does not lie  
 All strange to thine awakened eye?  
 Ah! what is here can testify  
 (Save that dumb presence of the sky)  
   Unto thy day and Nineveh?

Why, of those mummies in the room  
 Above, there might indeed have come  
 One out of Egypt to thy home,  
 An alien. Nay, but were not some  
   Of these thine own "antiquity"?  
 And now, — they and their gods and  
   thou  
 All relics here together, — now  
 Whose profit? whether bull or cow,  
 Isis or Ibis, who or how,  
   Whether of Thebes or Nineveh?

The consecrated metals found,  
 And ivory tablets, underground,  
 Winged teraphim and creatures crown'd  
 When air and daylight filled the mound,  
   Fell into dust immediately.  
 And even as these, the images  
 Of awe and worship, — even as these, —  
 So, smitten with the sun's increase,  
 Her glory mouldered and did cease  
   From immemorial Nineveh.

The day her builders made their halt,  
 Those cities of the lake of salt  
 Stood firmly 'stablished without fault,  
 Made proud with pillars of basalt,  
   With sardonix and porphyry.  
 The day that Jonah bore abroad  
 To Nineveh the voice of God,  
 A brackish lake lay in his road,  
 Where erst Pride fixed her sure abode,  
   As then in royal Nineveh.

The day when he, Pride's lord and  
   Man's,  
 Showed all the kingdoms at a glance  
 To Him before whose countenance  
 The years recede, the years advance,  
   And said, Fall down and worship me:—  
 'Mid all the pomp beneath that look,  
 Then stirred there, haply, some rebuke,  
 Where to the wind the salt pools shook,  
 And in those tracts, of life forsook,  
   That knew thee not, O Nineveh!



Delicate harlot! On thy throne  
 Thou with a world beneath thee prone  
 In state for ages sat'st alone;  
 And needs were years and lustres flown  
 Ere strength of man could vanquish  
 thee:

Whom even thy victor foes must bring,  
 Still royal, among maids that sing  
 As with doves' voices, taboring  
 Upon their breasts, unto the King,—  
 A kingly conquest, Nineveh!

. . . Here woke my thought. The wind's  
 slow sway

Had waxed; and like the human play  
 Of scorn that smiling spreads away,  
 The sunshine shivered off the day;

The callous wind, it seemed to me,  
 Swept up the shadow from the ground:  
 And pale as whom the Fates astound,  
 The god forlorn stood winged and  
 crown'd;

Within I knew the cry lay bound  
 Of the dumb soul of Nineveh.

And as I turned, my sense half shut  
 Still saw the crowds of kerb and rut  
 Go past as marshalled to the strut  
 Of ranks in gypsum quaintly cut.

It seemed in one same pageantry  
 They followed forms which had been erst;  
 To pass, till on my sight should burst  
 That future of the best or worst  
 When some may question which was  
 first,

Of London or of Nineveh.

For as that Bull-god once did stand  
 And watched the burial-clouds of sand,  
 Till these at last without a hand  
 Rose o'er his eye, another land,

And blinded him with destiny:—  
 So may he stand again; till now,  
 In ships of unknown sail and prow,  
 Some tribe of the Australian plough  
 Bear him afar,—a relic now

Of London, not of Nineveh!

Or it may chance indeed that when  
 Man's age is hoary among men,—  
 His centuries threescore and ten,—  
 His furthest childhood shall seem then

More clear than later times may be:  
 Who, finding in this desert place  
 This form, shall hold us for some race

That walked not in Christ's lowly ways,  
 But bowed its pride and vowed its praise  
 Unto the god of Nineveh.

The smile rose first,—anon drew nigh  
 The thought: . . . Those heavy wings  
 spread high

So sure of flight, which do not fly;  
 That set gaze never on the sky;

Those scripted flanks it cannot see;  
 Its crown, a brow-contracting load;  
 Its planted feet which trust the sod: . . .  
 (So grew the image as I trod:)  
 O Nineveh, was this thy God,—  
 Thine also, mighty Nineveh? 1856.

## MARY MAGDALENE

AT THE DOOR OF SIMON THE PHARISEE

(For a Drawing<sup>1</sup>)

"WHY wilt thou cast the roses from thine  
 hair?

Nay, be thou **all** a rose,—wreath, lips,  
 and cheek.

Nay, not this house,—that banquet-  
 house we seek;

See how they kiss and enter; come thou  
 there.

This delicate day of love we two will  
 share

Till at our ear love's whispering night  
 shall speak.

What, sweet one,—hold'st thou still the  
 foolish freak?

Nay, when I kiss thy feet they'll leave  
 the stair."

"Oh loose me! See'st thou not my  
 Bridegroom's face

That draws me to Him? For His feet  
 my kiss,

My hair, my tears He craves to-day:—  
 and oh!

What words can tell what other day and  
 place

Shall see me clasp those blood-stained  
 feet of His?

He needs me, calls me, loves me: let me  
 go!" 1856-1857. 1870.

<sup>1</sup> In the drawing Mary has left a festal procession, and is ascending by a sudden impulse the steps of the house where she sees Christ. Her lover has followed her and is trying to turn her back.

## ASPECTA MEDUSA

*(For a Drawing)*

ANDROMEDA, by Perseus saved and wed,  
 Hankered each day to see the Gorgon's  
 head :

Till o'er a fount he held it, bade her lean,  
 And mirrored in the wave was safely seen  
 That death she lived by.

Let not thine eyes know  
 Any forbidden thing itself, although  
 It once should save as well as kill : but be  
 Its shadow upon life enough for thee.

1870.

## LOVE'S NOCTURN

MASTER of the murmuring courts  
 Where the shapes of sleep convene! —

Lo! my spirit here exhorts  
 All the powers of thy demesne  
 For their aid to woo my queen.

What reports  
 Yield thy jealous courts unseen?

Vaporous, unaccountable,  
 Dreamland lies forlorn of light,  
 Hollow like a breathing shell.  
 Ah! that from all dreams I might  
 Choose one dream and guide its flight!

I know well  
 What her sleep should tell to-night.

There the dreams are multitudes :  
 Some that will not wait for sleep,  
 Deep within the August woods ;  
 Some that hum while rest may steep  
 Weary labor laid a-heap ;  
 Interludes,  
 Some, of grievous moods that weep.

Poets' fancies all are there :  
 There the elf-girls flood with wings  
 Valleys full of plaintive air ;  
 There breathe perfumes ; there in rings  
 Whirl the foam-bewildered springs.  
 Siren there  
 Winds her dizzy hair and sings.

Thence the one dream mutually  
 Dreamed in bridal unison,  
 Less than waking ecstasy ;  
 Half-formed visions that make moan  
 In the house of birth alone ;  
 And what we,  
 At death's wicket, see, unknown.

But for mine own sleep, it lies  
 In one gracious form's control,  
 Fair with honorable eyes,  
 Lamps of a translucent soul ;  
 O their glance is loftiest dole,  
 Sweet and wise,  
 Wherein Love describes his goal.

Reft of her, my dreams are all  
 Clammy trance that fears the sky :  
 Changing footpaths shift and fall ;  
 From polluted coverts nigh,  
 Miserable phantoms sigh :  
 Quakes the pall,  
 And the funeral goes by.

Master, is it soothly said  
 That, as echoes of man's speech  
 Far in secret clefts are made,  
 So do all men's bodies reach  
 Shadows o'er thy sunken beach, —  
 Shape or shade  
 In those halls portrayed of each?

Ah! might I, by thy good grace  
 Groping in the windy stair,  
 (Darkness and the breath of space  
 Like loud waters everywhere),  
 Meeting mine own image there  
 Face to face,  
 Send it from that place to her!

Nay, not I; but oh! do thou,  
 Master, from thy shadow kind  
 Call my body's phantom now :  
 Bid it bear its face declin'd  
 Till its flight her slumbers find,  
 And her brow  
 Feel its presence bow like wind.

Where in groves the gracile Spring  
 Trembles, with mute orison  
 Confidently strengthening,  
 Water's voice and wind's as one  
 Shed an echo in the sun.  
 Soft as Spring,  
 Master, bid it sing and moan.

Song shall tell how glad and strong  
 Is the night she soothes away ;  
 Moan shall grieve with that parched  
 tongue  
 Of the brazen hours of day :  
 Sounds as of the springtide they,  
 Moan and song,  
 While the chill months long for May.

Not the prayers which with all leave  
 The world's fluent woes prefer, —  
 Not the praise the world doth give,  
 Dulcet fulsome whisperer; —  
 Let it yield my love to her,  
 And achieve  
 Strength that shall not grieve or err.

Wheresoe'er my dreams befall,  
 Both at night-watch (let it say),  
 And where round the sun-dial  
 The reluctant hours of day,  
 Heartless, hopeless of their way,  
 Rest and call;  
 There her glance doth fall and stay.

Suddenly her face is there;  
 So do mounting vapors wreath  
 Subtle-scented transports where  
 The black fir-wood sets its teeth.  
 Part the boughs and look beneath, —  
 Lilies share  
 Secret waters there, and breathe.

Master, bid my shadow bend  
 Whispering thus till birth of light,  
 Lest new shapes that sleep may send  
 Scatter all its work to flight; —  
 Master, master of the night,  
 Bid it spend  
 Speech, song, prayer, and end aright.

Yet, ah me! if at her head  
 There another phantom lean  
 Murmuring o'er the fragrant bed, —  
 Ah! and if my spirit's queen  
 Smile those alien words between, —  
 Ah! poor shade!  
 Shall it strive, or fade unseen?

How should love's own messenger  
 Strive with love and be love's foe?  
 Master, nay! If thus, in her,  
 Sleep a wedded heart should show, —  
 Silent let mine image go,  
 Its old share  
 Of thy spell-bound air to know.

Like a vapor wan and mute,  
 Like a flame, so let it pass;  
 One low sigh across her lute,  
 One dull breath against her glass;  
 And to my sad soul, alas!  
 One salute  
 Cold as when death's foot shall pass.

Then, too, let all hopes of mine,  
 All vain hopes by night and day,  
 Slowly at thy summoning sign  
 Rise up pallid and obey.  
 Dreams, if this is thus, were they: —  
 Be they thine,  
 And to dreamworld pine away.

Yet from old time, life, not death,  
 Master, in thy rule is rife:  
 Lo! through thee, with mingling breath,  
 Adam woke beside his wife.  
 O Love bring me so, for strife,  
 Force and faith,  
 Bring me so not death but life!

Yea, to Love himself is pour'd  
 This frail song of hope and fear.  
 Thou art Love, of one accord  
 With kind Sleep to bring her near,  
 Still-eyed, deep-eyed, ah how dear!  
 Master, Lord,  
 In her name implor'd, O hear! 1870.

### FIRST LOVE REMEMBERED

PEACE in her chamber, wheresoe'er  
 It be, a holy place:  
 The thought still brings my soul such  
 grace  
 As morning meadows wear.

Whether it still be small and light,  
 A maid's who dreams alone,  
 As from her orchard-gate the moon  
 Its ceiling showed at night:

Or whether, in a shadow dense  
 As nuptial hymns invoke,  
 Innocent maidenhood awoke  
 To married innocence:

There still the thanks unheard await  
 The unconscious gift bequeathed;  
 For there my soul this hour has  
 breathed  
 An air inviolate. 1870.

### THE WOODSPURGE

THE wind flapped loose, the wind was still,  
 Shaken out dead from tree and hill:  
 I had walked on at the wind's will, —  
 I sat now, for the wind was still.

Between my knees my forehead was, —  
My lips, drawn in, said not Alas!  
My hair was over in the grass,  
My naked ears heard the day pass.

My eyes, wide open, had the run  
Of some ten weeds to fix upon;  
Among those few, out of the sun,  
The woodspurge flowered, three cups in  
one.

From perfect grief there need not be  
Wisdom or even memory:  
One thing then learnt remains to me, —  
The woodspurge has a cup of three.

1870.

## TROY TOWN

HEAVENBORN HELEN, Sparta's queen,  
(*O Troy Town!*)  
Had two breasts of heavenly sheen,  
The sun and moon of the heart's desire:  
All Love's lordship lay between.  
(*O Troy's down,*  
*Tall Troy's on fire!*)

Helen knelt at Venus' shrine,  
(*O Troy Town!*)  
Saying "A little gift is mine,  
A little gift for a heart's desire.  
Hear me speak and make me a sign!  
(*O Troy's down,*  
*Tall Troy's on fire!*)

"Look, I bring thee a carven cup;  
(*O Troy Town!*)  
See it here as I hold it up, —  
Shaped it is to the heart's desire,  
Fit to fill when the gods would sup.  
(*O Troy's down,*  
*Tall Troy's on fire!*)

"It was moulded like my breast;  
(*O Troy Town!*)  
He that sees it may not rest,  
Rest at all for his heart's desire.  
O give ear to my heart's behest!  
(*O Troy's down,*  
*Tall Troy's on fire!*)

"See my breast, how like it is;  
(*O Troy Town!*)  
See it bare for the air to kiss!  
Is the cup to thy heart's desire?  
O for the breast, O make it his!  
(*O Troy's down,*  
*Tall Troy's on fire!*)

"Yea, for my bosom here I sue:  
(*O Troy Town!*)  
Thou must give it where 'tis due,  
Give it there to the heart's desire.  
Whom do I give my bosom to?  
(*O Troy's down,*  
*Tall Troy's on fire!*)

"Each twin breast is an apple sweet!  
(*O Troy Town!*)  
Once an apple stirred the beat  
Of thy heart with the heart's desire:  
Say, who brought it then to thy feet?  
(*O Troy's down,*  
*Tall Troy's on fire!*)

"They that claimed it then were three:  
(*O Troy Town!*)  
For thy sake two hearts did he  
Make forlorn of the heart's desire.  
Do for him as he did for thee!  
(*O Troy's down,*  
*Tall Troy's on fire!*)

"Mine are apples grown to the south,  
(*O Troy Town!*)  
Grown to taste in the days of drouth,  
Taste and waste to the heart's desire:  
Mine are apples meet for his mouth!"  
(*O Troy's down,*  
*Tall Troy's on fire!*)

Venus looked on Helen's gift,  
(*O Troy Town!*)  
Looked and smiled with subtle drift,  
Saw the work of her heart's desire: —  
"There thou kneel'st for Love to lift!"  
(*O Troy's down,*  
*Tall Troy's on fire!*)

Venus looked in Helen's face,  
(*O Troy Town!*)  
Knew far off an hour and place,  
And fire lit from the heart's desire;  
Laughed and said, "Thy gift hath grace!"  
(*O Troy's down,*  
*Tall Troy's on fire!*)

Cupid looked on Helen's breast,  
(*O Troy Town!*)  
Saw the heart within its nest,  
Saw the flame of the heart's desire, —  
Marked his arrow's burning crest.  
(*O Troy's down,*  
*Tall Troy's on fire!*)

Cupid took another dart,  
 (O Troy Town!)  
 Fledged it for another heart,  
 Winged the shaft with the heart's desire,  
 Drew the string and said, "Depart!"  
 (O Troy's down,  
 Tall Troy's on fire!)

Paris turned upon his bed,  
 (O Troy Town!)  
 Turned upon his bed and said,  
 Dead at heart with the heart's desire, —  
 "O to clasp her golden head!"  
 (O Troy's down,  
 Tall Troy's on fire!)  
 1870.

### LOVE-LILY

BETWEEN the hands, between the brows,  
 Between the lips of Love-Lily,  
 A spirit is born whose birth endows  
 My blood with fire to burn through me;  
 Who breathes upon my gazing eyes,

Who laughs and murmurs in mine ear,  
 At whose least touch my color flies,  
 And whom my life grows faint to hear.

Within the voice, within the heart,  
 Within the mind of Love-Lily,  
 A spirit is born who lifts apart  
 His tremulous wings and looks at me;  
 Who on my mouth his finger lays,  
 And shows, while whispering lutes  
 confer,  
 That Eden of Love's watered ways  
 Whose winds and spirits worship her.

Brows, hands, and lips, heart, mind, and  
 voice,  
 Kisses and words of Love-Lily, —  
 Oh! bid me with your joy rejoice  
 Till riotous longing rest in me!  
 Ah! let not hope be still distraught,  
 But find in her its gracious goal,  
 Whose speech Truth knows not from her  
 thought  
 Nor Love her body from her soul.  
 1870.

## THE HOUSE OF LIFE

### THE SONNET

*A Sonnet is a moment's monument, —  
 Memorial from the Soul's eternity  
 To one dead deathless hour. Look that it be,  
 Whether for lustral rite or dire portent,  
 Of its own arduous fulness reverent:  
 Carve it in ivory or in ebony,  
 As Day or Night may rule; and let Time see  
 Its flowering crest impearled and orient.  
 A Sonnet is a coin: its face reveals  
 The Soul, — its converse, to what Power  
 'tis due: —  
 Whether for tribute to the august appeals  
 Of Life, or dower in Love's high retinue,  
 It serve; or 'mid the dark wharf's cavernous  
 breath,  
 In Charon's palm it pay the toll to Death.*

### PART I. YOUTH AND CHANGE

#### I. LOVE ENTHRONED

I MARKED all kindred Powers the heart  
 finds fair: —  
 Truth, with awed lips; and Hope, with  
 eyes upcast;

And Fame, whose loud wings fan the  
 ashen Past  
 To signal-fires, Oblivion's flight to scare;  
 And Youth, with still some single golden  
 hair  
 Unto his shoulder clinging, since the last  
 Embrace wherein two sweet arms held  
 him fast;  
 And Life, still wreathing flowers for Death  
 to wear.  
 Love's throne was not with these; but  
 far above  
 All passionate wind of welcome and  
 farewell  
 He sat in breathless bowers they dream  
 not of;  
 Though Truth foreknow Love's heart,  
 and Hope foretell,  
 And Fame be for Love's sake desirable,  
 And Youth be dear, and Life be sweet  
 to Love.

#### II. BRIDAL BIRTH

As when desire, long darkling, dawns,  
 and first  
 The mother looks upon the new-born child,



Even so my Lady stood at gaze and smiled  
 When her soul knew at length the Love it  
   nurs'd.  
 Born with her life, creature of poignant  
   thirst  
 And exquisite hunger, at her heart Love  
   lay  
 Quickening in darkness, till a voice that  
   day  
 Cried on him, and the bonds of birth  
   were burst.  
 Now, shadowed by his wings, our faces  
   yearn  
 Together, as his fullgrown feet now range  
 The grove, and his warm hands our  
   couch prepare :  
 Till to his song our bodiless souls in turn  
 Be born his children, when Death's nup-  
   tial change  
 Leaves us for light the halo of his hair.

## III. LOVE'S TESTAMENT

O THOU who at Love's hour ecstatically  
 Unto my heart dost ever more present,  
 Clothed with his fire, thy heart his tes-  
   tament;  
 Whom I have neared and felt thy breath  
   to be  
 The inmost incense of his sanctuary;  
 Who without speech hast owned him,  
   and, intent  
 Upon his will, thy life with mine hast  
   blent,  
 And murmured, "I am thine, thou'rt  
   one with me!"  
 O what from thee the grace, to me the  
   prize,  
 And what to Love the glory, — when the  
   whole  
 Of the deep stair thou tread'st to the  
   dim shoal  
 And weary water of the place of sighs,  
 And there dost work deliverance, as  
   thine eyes  
 Draw up my prisoned spirit to thy soul!

## IV. LOVESIGHT

WHEN do I see thee most, beloved one?  
 When in the light the spirits of mine eyes  
 Before thy face, their altar, solemnize  
 The worship of that Love through thee  
   made known?  
 Or when in the dusk hours, (we two  
   alone,)

Close-kissed and eloquent of still replies  
 Thy twilight-hidden glimmering visage  
   lies,  
 And my soul only sees thy soul its own?  
 O love, my love! if I no more should see  
 Thyself, nor on the earth the shadow of  
   thee,  
 Nor image of thine eyes in any spring, —  
 How then should sound upon Life's  
   darkening slope  
 The ground-whirl of the perished leaves  
   of Hope,  
 The wind of Death's imperishable wing?

## V. HEART'S HOPE

By what word's power, the key of paths  
   untrod,  
 Shall I the difficult deeps of Love explore,  
 Till parted waves of Song yield up the  
   shore  
 Even as that sea which Israel crossed  
   dryshod?  
 For lo! in some poor rhythmic period,  
 Lady, I fain would tell how evermore  
 Thy soul I know not from thy body,  
   nor  
 Thee from myself, neither our love from  
   God.  
 Yea, in God's name, and Love's, and  
   thine, would I  
 Draw from one loving heart such evidence  
 As to all hearts all things shall signify;  
 Tender as dawn's first hill-fire, and in-  
   tense  
 As instantaneous penetrating sense,  
 In Spring's birth-hour, of other Springs  
   gone by.

## VIII. LOVE'S LOVERS

SOME ladies love the jewels in Love's  
   zone  
 And gold-tipped darts he hath for pain-  
   less play  
 In idle scornful hours he flings away;  
 And some that listen to his lute's soft  
   tone  
 Do love to vaunt the silver praise their  
   own;  
 Some prize his blindfold sight; and  
   there be they  
 Who kissed his wings which brought  
   him yesterday  
 And thank his wings to-day that he is  
   flown.

My lady only loves the heart of Love :  
 Therefore Love's heart, my lady, hath  
     for thee  
 His bower of unimagined flower and tree :  
 There kneels he now, and all-anhungered  
     of  
 Thine eyes gray-lit in shadowing hair  
     above,  
 Seals with thy mouth his immortality.

## IX. PASSION AND WORSHIP

ONE flame-winged brought a white-  
     winged harp-player  
 Even where my lady and I lay all alone ;  
 Saying : " Behold, this minstrel is un-  
     known ;  
 Bid him depart, for I am minstrel here :  
 Only my strains are to Love's dear ones  
     dear."   
 Then said I : " Through thine hautboy's  
     rapturous tone  
 Unto my lady still this harp makes moan,  
 And still she deems the cadence deep and  
     clear."   
 Then said my lady : " Thou art Passion of  
     Love,  
 And this Love's Worship : both he plights  
     to me.  
 Thy mastering music walks the sunlit sea :  
 But where wan water trembles in the  
     grove  
 And the wan moon is all the light there-  
     of,  
 This harp still makes my name its vol-  
     untary."

## X. THE PORTRAIT

O LORD of all compassionate control,  
 O Love ! let this my lady's picture glow  
 Under my hand to praise her name, and  
     show  
 Even of her inner self the perfect whole :  
 That he who seeks her beauty's furthest  
     goal,  
 Beyond the light that the sweet glances  
     throw  
 And reflux wave of the sweet smile,  
     may know  
 The very sky and sea-line of her soul.  
 Lo ! it is done. Above the enthroning  
     throat  
 The mouth's mould testifies of voice and  
     kiss,  
 The shadowed eyes remember and fore-  
     sec.

Her face is made her shrine. Let all men  
     note  
 That in all years (O Love, thy gift is  
     this !)  
 They that would look on her must come  
     to me.

## XI. THE LOVE-LETTER

WARMED by her hand and shadowed by  
     her hair  
 As close she leaned and poured her heart  
     through thee,  
 Whereof the articulate throbs accompany  
 The smooth black stream that makes thy  
     whiteness fair, —  
 Sweet fluttering sheet, even of her breath  
     aware, —  
 Oh let thy silent song disclose to me  
 That soul wherewith her lips and eyes  
     agree  
 Like married music in Love's answering  
     air.  
 Fain had I watched her when, at some  
     fond thought,  
 Her bosom to the writing closelier press'd  
 And her breast's secrets peered into her  
     breast ;  
 When, through eyes raised an instant,  
     her soul sought  
 My soul, and from the sudden confluence  
     caught  
 The words that made her love the love-  
     liest.

## XII. THE LOVERS' WALK

SWEET twining hedgeflowers wind-stirred  
     in no wise  
 On this June day ; and hand that clings  
     in hand : —  
 Still glades ; and meeting faces scarcely  
     fann'd :  
 An osier-odored stream that draws the  
     skies  
 Deep to its heart ; and mirrored eyes in  
     eyes : —  
 Fresh hourly wonder o'er the Summer  
     land  
 Of light and cloud ; and two souls softly  
     spann'd  
 With one o'erarching heaven of smiles  
     and sighs : —  
 Even such their path, whose bodies lean  
     unto  
 Each other's visible sweetness amo-  
     rously, —

Whose passionate hearts lean by Love's  
high decree  
Together on his heart for ever true,  
As the cloud-foaming firmamental blue  
Rests on the blue line of a foamless sea.

## XIII. YOUTH'S ANTIPHONY

"I LOVE you, sweet: how can you ever  
learn  
How much I love you?" "You I love  
even so,  
And so I learn it." "Sweet, you can-  
not know  
How fair you are." "If fair enough to  
earn  
Your love, so much is all my love's con-  
cern."  
"My love grows hourly, sweet." "Mine  
too doth grow,  
Yet love seemed full so many hours ago!"  
Thus lovers speak, till kisses claim their  
turn.  
Ah! happy they to whom such words as  
these  
In youth have served for speech the whole  
day long,  
Hour after hour, remote from the world's  
throng,  
Work, contest, fame, all life's confederate  
pleas, —  
What while Love breathed in sighs and  
silences  
Through two blent souls one rapturous  
undersong.

## XIV. YOUTH'S SPRING-TRIBUTE

ON this sweet bank your head thrice  
sweet and dear  
I lay, and spread your hair on either  
side,  
And see the newborn woodflowers bash-  
ful-eyed  
Look through the golden tresses here and  
there.  
On these debatable borders of the year  
Spring's foot half falters; scarce she yet  
may know  
The leafless blackthorn-blossom from  
the snow;  
And through her bowers the wind's way  
still is clear.  
But April's sun strikes down the glades  
to-day;  
So shut your eyes upturned, and feel my  
kiss

Creep, as the Spring now thrills through  
every spray,  
Up your warm throat to your warm lips;  
for this  
Is even the hour of Love's sworn suit-  
service,  
With whom cold hearts are counted  
castaway.

## XV. THE BIRTH-BOND

HAVE you not noted, in some family  
Where two were born of a first marriage-  
bed,  
How still they own their gracious bond,  
though fed  
And nursed on the forgotten breast and  
knee? —  
How to their father's children they shall  
be  
In act and thought of one goodwill; but  
each  
Shall for the other have, in silence speech,  
And in a word complete community?  
Even so, when first I saw you, seemed it,  
love,  
That among souls allied to mine was  
yet  
One nearer kindred than life hinted of.  
O born with me somewhere that men  
forget,  
And though in years of sight and sound  
unmet,  
Known for my soul's birth-partner well  
enough!

## XVII. BEAUTY'S PAGEANT

WHAT dawn-pulse at the heart of heaven,  
or last  
Incarnate flower of culminating day, —  
What marshalled marvels on the skirts  
of May,  
Or song full-quired, sweet June's enco-  
miast;  
What glory of change by nature's hand  
amass'd  
Can vie with all those moods of varying  
grace  
Which o'er one loveliest woman's form  
and face  
Within this hour, within this room, have  
pass'd?  
Love's very vesture and elect disguise  
Was each fine movement, — wonder new-  
begot  
Of lily or swan or swan-stemmed galiot;

Joy to his sight who now the sadlier sighs,  
 Parted again, and sorrow yet for eyes  
 Unborn, that read these words and saw  
 her not.

## XVIII. GENIUS IN BEAUTY

BEAUTY like hers is genius. Not the call  
 Of Homer's or of Dante's heart sub-  
 lime, —  
 Not Michael's hand furrowing the zones  
 of time, —  
 Is more with compassed mysteries musi-  
 cal;  
 Nay, not in Spring's or Summer's sweet  
 footfall  
 More gathered gifts exuberant Life be-  
 queathes  
 Than doth this sovereign face, whose love-  
 spell breathes  
 Even from its shadowed contour on the  
 wall.  
 As many men are poets in their youth,  
 But for one sweet-strung soul the wires  
 prolong  
 Even through all change the indomitable  
 song;  
 So in like wise the envenomed years,  
 whose tooth  
 Rends shallower grace with ruin void of  
 ruth,  
 Upon this beauty's power shall wreak no  
 wrong.

## XIX. SILENT NOON

YOUR hands lie open in the long, fresh  
 grass, —  
 The finger-points look through like rosy  
 blooms:  
 Your eyes smile peace. The pasture  
 gleams and glooms  
 'Neath billowing skies that scatter and  
 amass.  
 All round our nest, far as the eye can  
 pass,  
 Are golden kingcup-fields with silver  
 edge  
 Where the cow-parsley skirts the haw-  
 thorn hedge.  
 'Tis visible silence, still as the hour-glass.  
 Deep in the sun-searched growths the  
 dragon-fly  
 Hangs like a blue thread loosened from  
 the sky, —

So this wing'd hour is dropped to us from  
 above.

Oh! clasp we to our hearts, for death-  
 less dower,  
 This close-companioned inarticulate hour  
 When twofold silence was the song of love.

## XXI. LOVE-SWEETNESS

SWEET dimness of her loosened hair's  
 downfall  
 About thy face; her sweet hands round  
 thy head  
 In gracious fostering union garlanded;  
 Her tremulous smiles; her glances' sweet  
 recall  
 Of love; her murmuring sighs memorial;  
 Her mouth's culled sweetness by thy  
 kisses shed  
 On cheeks and neck and eyelids, and so led  
 Back to her mouth, which answers there  
 for all: —  
 What sweeter than these things, except  
 the thing  
 In lacking which all these would lose  
 their sweet: —  
 The confident heart's still fervor: the  
 swift beat  
 And soft subsidence of the spirit's wing,  
 Then when it feels, in cloud-girt way-  
 faring,  
 The breath of kindred plumes against its  
 feet?

## XXIV. PRIDE OF YOUTH

EVEN as a child, of sorrow that we give  
 The dead, but little in his heart can find,  
 Since without need of thought to his  
 clear mind  
 Their turn it is to die and his to live: —  
 Even so the winged New Love smiles to  
 receive  
 Along his eddying plumes the auroral  
 wind,  
 Nor, forward glorying, casts one look  
 behind  
 Where night-rack shrouds the Old Love  
 fugitive.  
 There is a change in every hour's recall,  
 And the last cowslip in the fields we see  
 On the same day with the first corn-poppy.  
 Alas for hourly change! Alas for all  
 The loves that from his hand proud  
 Youth lets fall,  
 Even as the beads of a told rosary!

## XXVI. MID-RAPTURE

THOU lovely and beloved, thou my love;  
 Whose kiss seems still the first; whose  
     summoning eyes,  
 Even now, as for our love-world's new  
     sunrise,  
 Shed very dawn; whose voice, attuned  
     above  
 All modulation of the deep-bowered dove,  
 Is like a hand laid softly on the soul;  
 Whose hand is like a sweet voice to con-  
     trol  
 Those worn tired brows it hath the keep-  
     ing of: —  
 What word can answer to thy word —  
     what gaze  
 To thine, which now absorbs within its  
     sphere  
 My worshipping face, till I am mirrored  
     there  
 Light-circled in a heaven of deep-drawn  
     rays?  
 What clasp, what kiss mine inmost heart  
     can prove,  
 O lovely and beloved, O my love?

## XXVII. HEART'S COMPASS

SOMETIMES thou seem'st not as thyself  
     alone,  
 But as the meaning of all things that  
     are;  
 A breathless wonder, shadowing forth  
     afar  
 Some heavenly solstice hushed and hal-  
     cyon;  
 Whose unstirred lips are music's visible  
     tone:  
 Whose eyes the sun-gate of the soul  
     unbar,  
 Being of its furthest fires oracular —  
 The evident heart of all life sown and  
     mown.  
 Even such love is; and is not thy name  
     Love?  
 Yea, by thy hand the Love-god rends  
     apart  
 All gathering clouds of Night's ambigu-  
     ous art;  
 Flings them far down, and sets thine eyes  
     above;  
 And simply, as some gage of flower or  
     glove,  
 Stakes with a smile the world against  
     thy heart.

## XXXI. HER GIFTS

HIGH grace, the dower of queens; and  
     therewithal  
 Some wood-born wonder's sweet sim-  
     plicity;  
 A glance like water brimming with the sky  
 Or hyacinth-light where forest-shadows  
     fall;  
 Such thrilling pallor of cheek as doth  
     enthrall  
 The heart; a mouth whose passionate  
     forms imply  
 All music and all silence held thereby;  
 Deep golden locks, her sovereign coronal;  
 A round reared neck, meet column of  
     Love's shrine  
 To cling to when the heart takes sanc-  
     tuary;  
 Hands which for ever at Love's bidding  
     be,  
 And soft-stirred feet still answering to  
     his sign: —  
 These are her gifts, as tongue may tell  
     them o'er.  
 Breathe low her name, my soul; for that  
     means more.

## XXXII. EQUAL TROTH

NOT by one measure mayst thou mete  
     our love;  
 For how should I be loved as I love  
     thee? —  
 I, graceless, joyless, lacking absolutely  
 All gifts that with thy queenship best  
     behave; —  
 Thou, throned in every heart's elect al-  
     cove,  
 And crowned with garlands culled from  
     every tree,  
 Which for no head but thine, by Love's  
     decree,  
 All beauties and all mysteries interwove.  
 But here thine eyes and lips yield soft  
     rebuke: —  
 "Then only," (say'st thou) "could I  
     love thee less,  
 When thou couldst doubt my love's  
     equality."  
 Peace, sweet! If not to sum but worth  
     we look,  
 Thy heart's transcendence, not my heart's  
     excess, —  
 Then more a thousandfold thou lov'st  
     than I.



## XXXIII. VENUS VICTRIX

COULD Juno's self more sovereign presence wear  
 Than thou, 'mid other ladies throned in grace? —  
 Or Pallas, when thou bend'st with soul-stilled face  
 O'er poet's page gold-shadowed in thy hair?  
 Dost thou than Venus seem less heavenly fair  
 When o'er the sea of love's tumultuous trance  
 Hovers thy smile, and mingles with thy glance  
 That sweet voice like the last wave murmuring there?  
 Before such triune loveliness divine  
 Awestruck I ask, which goddess here most claims  
 The prize that, howsoe'er adjudged, is thine?  
 Then Love breathes low the sweetest of thy names;  
 And Venus Victrix to my heart doth bring  
 Herself, the Helen of her guerdoning.

## XXXIV. THE DARK GLASS

NOT I myself know all my love for thee:  
 How should I reach so far, who cannot weigh  
 To-morrow's dower by gage of yesterday?  
 Shall birth and death, and all dark names that be  
 As doors and windows bared to some loud sea,  
 Lash deaf mine ears and blind my face with spray;  
 And shall my sense pierce love, — the last relay  
 And ultimate outpost of eternity?  
 Lo! what am I to Love, the lord of all?  
 One murmuring shell he gathers from the sand,  
 One little heart-flame sheltered in his hand.  
 Yet through thine eyes he grants me clearest call  
 And veriest touch of powers primordial  
 That any hour-girt life may understand.

## XL. SEVERED SELVES

Two separate divided silences,  
 Which, brought together, would find loving voice;  
 Two glances which together would rejoice  
 In love, now lost like stars beyond dark trees;  
 Two hands apart whose touch alone gives ease;  
 Two bosoms which, heart-shrined with mutual flame,  
 Would, meeting in one clasp, be made the same;  
 Two souls, the shores wave-mocked of sundering seas: —  
 Such are we now. Ah! may our hope forecast  
 Indeed one hour again, when on this stream  
 Of darkened love once more the light shall gleam? —  
 An hour how slow to come, how quickly past, —  
 Which blooms and fades, and only leaves at last,  
 Faint as shed flowers, the attenuated dream.

## XLI. THROUGH DEATH TO LOVE

LIKE labor-laden moonclouds faint to flee  
 From winds that sweep the winter-bitten wold, —  
 Like multiform circumfluence manifold  
 Of night's flood-tide, — like terrors that agree  
 Of hoarse-tongued fire and inarticulate sea, —  
 Even such, within some glass dimmed by our breath,  
 Our hearts discern wild images of Death,  
 Shadows and shoals that edge eternity.  
 Howbeit athwart Death's imminent shade doth soar  
 One Power, than flow of stream or flight of dove  
 Sweeter to glide around, to brood above.  
 Tell me, my heart, — what angel-greeted door  
 Or threshold of wing-winnowed threshing-floor  
 Hath guest fire-fledged as thine, whose lord is Love?

## XLVIII. DEATH-IN-LOVE

THERE came an image in Life's retinue  
 That had Love's wings and bore his  
 gonfalon:  
 Fair was the web, and nobly wrought  
 thereon,  
 O soul-sequestered face, thy form and hue!  
 Bewildering sounds, such as Spring  
 wakens to,  
 Shook in its folds; and through my  
 heart its power  
 Sped trackless as the immemorable hour  
 When birth's dark portal groaned and  
 all was new.  
 But a veiled woman followed, and she  
 caught  
 The banner round its staff, to furl and  
 cling, —  
 Then plucked a feather from the bearer's  
 wing,  
 And held it to his lips that stirred it not,  
 And said to me, "Behold, there is no  
 breath:  
 I and this Love are one, and I am Death."

## XLIX. WILLOWWOOD — I

I SAT with Love upon a woodside well,  
 Leaning across the water, I and he;  
 Nor ever did he speak nor looked at me,  
 But touched his lute wherein was audible  
 The certain secret thing he had to tell:  
 Only our mirrored eyes met silently  
 In the low wave; and that sound came  
 to be  
 The passionate voice I knew; and my  
 tears fell.  
 And at their fall, his eyes beneath grew  
 hers;  
 And with his foot and with his wing-  
 feathers  
 He swept the spring that watered my  
 heart's drouth.  
 Then the dark ripples spread to waving  
 hair,  
 And as I stooped, her own lips rising there  
 Bubbled with brimming kisses at my  
 mouth.

## L. WILLOWWOOD — II

AND now Love sang: but his was such  
 a song,  
 So meshed with half-remembrance hard  
 to free,  
 As souls disused in death's sterility

May sing when the new birthday tarries  
 long.

And I was made aware of a dumb throng  
 That stood aloof, one form by every tree,  
 All mournful forms, for each was I or she,  
 The shades of those our days that had  
 no tongue.

They looked on us, and knew us and  
 were known;

While fast together, alive from the abyss,  
 Clung the soul-wrung implacable close  
 kiss;

And pity of self through all made broken  
 moan

Which said, "For once, for once, for  
 once alone!"

And still Love sang, and what he sang  
 was this: —

## LI. WILLOWWOOD — III

"O YE, all ye that walk in Willowwood,  
 That walk with hollow faces burning  
 white;

What fathom-depth of soul-struck widow-  
 hood,

What long, what longer hours, one life-  
 long night,

Ere ye again, who so in vain have wooed  
 Your last hope lost, who so in vain invite  
 Your lips to that their unforgotten food,  
 Ere ye, ere ye again shall see the light!  
 Alas! the bitter banks in Willowwood,  
 With tear-spurge wan, with blood-wort  
 burning red:

Alas! if ever such a pillow could  
 Steep deep the soul in sleep till she were  
 dead, —

Better all life forget her than this thing,  
 That Willowwood should hold her wan-  
 dering!"

## LII. WILLOWWOOD — IV

So sang he: and as meeting rose and rose  
 Together cling through the wind's well-  
 away

Nor change at once, yet near the end of  
 day

The leaves drop loosened where the heart-  
 stain glows, —

So when the song died did the kiss un-  
 close;

And her face fell back drowned, and was  
 as gray

As its gray eyes; and if it ever may

Meet mine again I know not if Love  
 knows.  
 Only I know that I leaned low and drank  
 A long draught from the water where  
 she sank.  
 Her breath and all her tears and all her  
 soul:  
 And as I leaned, I know I felt Love's  
 face  
 Pressed on my neck with moan of pity and  
 grace,  
 Till both our heads were in his aureole.

## LIII. WITHOUT HER

WHAT of her glass without her! The  
 blank gray  
 There where the pool is blind of the  
 moon's face.  
 Her dress without her? The tossed  
 empty space  
 Of cloud-rack whence the moon has  
 passed away.  
 Her paths without her? Day's appointed  
 sway  
 Usurped by desolate night. Her pil-  
 lowed place  
 Without her? Tears, ah me! for love's  
 good grace,  
 And cold forgetfulness of night or day.  
 What of the heart without her? Nay,  
 poor heart,  
 Of thee what word remains ere speech  
 be still?  
 A wayfarer by barren ways and chill,  
 Steep ways and weary, without her thou  
 art,  
 Where the long cloud, the long wood's  
 counterpart,  
 Sheds doubled darkness up the laboring  
 hill.

## LV. STILLBORN LOVE

THE hour which might have been yet  
 might not be,  
 Which man's and woman's heart con-  
 ceived and bore  
 Yet whereof life was barren, — on what  
 shore  
 Bides it the breaking of Time's weary  
 sea?  
 Bondchild of all consummate joys set  
 free,  
 It somewhere sighs and serves, and mute  
 before

The house of Love, hears through the  
 echoing door  
 His hours elect in choral consonancy.  
 But lo! what wedded souls now hand in  
 hand  
 Together tread at last the immortal  
 strand  
 With eyes where burning memory lights  
 love home?  
 Lo! how the little outcast hour has  
 turned  
 And leaped to them and in their faces  
 yearned:—  
 "I am your child: O parents, ye have  
 come!"

## LVI. TRUE WOMAN — I. HERSELF

To be a sweetness more desired than  
 Spring;  
 A bodily beauty more acceptable  
 Than the wild rose-tree's arch that  
 crowns the fell;  
 To be an essence more environing  
 Than wine's drained juice; a music  
 ravishing  
 More than the passionate pulse of Phil-  
 omel;—  
 To be all this 'neath one soft bosom's  
 swell  
 That is the flower of life: — how strange  
 a thing!  
 How strange a thing to be what Man  
 can know  
 But as a sacred secret! Heaven's own  
 screen  
 Hides her soul's purest depth and loveli-  
 est glow;  
 Closely withheld, as all things most un-  
 seen,—  
 The wave-bowered pearl, — the heart-  
 shaped seal of green  
 That flecks the snowdrop underneath the  
 snow.

## LVII. TRUE WOMAN — II. HER LOVE

SHE loves him; for her infinite soul is  
 Love,  
 And he her lodestar. Passion in her is  
 A glass facing his fire, where the bright  
 bliss  
 Is mirrored, and the heat returned. Yet  
 move  
 That glass, a stranger's amorous flame to  
 prove,

And it shall turn, by instant contraries,  
Ice to the moon; while her pure fire to his  
For whom it burns, clings close i' the  
heart's alcove.

Lo! they are one. With wifely breast  
to breast

And circling arms, she welcomes all  
command

Of love,—her soul to answering ardors  
fann'd:

Yet as morn springs or twilight sinks to  
rest,

Ah! who shall say she deems not love-  
liest

The hour of sisterly sweet hand-in-hand?

#### LVIII. TRUE WOMAN — III. HER HEAVEN

If to grow old in Heaven is to grow young,  
(As the Seer saw and said,) then blest  
were he

With youth for evermore, whose heaven  
should be

True Woman, she whom these weak  
notes have sung,

Here and hereafter,—choir-strains of  
her tongue,—

Sky-spaces of her eyes,—sweet signs  
that flee

About her soul's immediate sanctuary,—  
Were Paradise all uttermost worlds  
among.

The sunrise blooms and withers on the  
hill

Like any hillflower; and the noblest troth  
Dies here to dust. Yet shall Heaven's  
promise clothe

Even yet those lovers who have cherished  
still

This test for love;—in every kiss sealed  
fast

To feel the first kiss and forbode the last.

#### LIX. LOVE'S LAST GIFT

LOVE to his singer held a glistening leaf,  
And said: "The rose-tree and the apple-  
tree

Have fruits to vaunt or flowers to lure  
the bee;

And golden shafts are in the feathered  
sheaf

Of the great harvest-marshal, the year's  
chief,

Victorious Summer; aye, and 'neath  
warm sea

Strange secret grasses lurk inviolably  
Between the filtering channels of sunk reef.  
All are my blooms; and all sweet blooms  
of love

To thee I gave while Spring and Summer  
sang;

But Autumn stops to listen, with some  
pang

From those worse things the wind is  
moaning of.

Only this laurel dreads no winter days:  
Take my last gift; thy heart hath sung  
my praise."

#### PART II. CHANGE AND FATE

##### LX. TRANSFIGURED LIFE

As growth of form or momentary glance  
In a child's features will recall to mind  
The father's with the mother's face com-  
bin'd,—

Sweet interchange that memories still  
enhance:

And yet, as childhood's years and youth's  
advance,

The gradual mouldings leave one stamp  
behind,

Till in the blended likeness now we find  
A separate man's or woman's counte-  
nance:—

So in the Song, the singer's Joy and Pain,  
Its very parents, evermore expand

To bid the passion's fullgrown birth re-  
main,

By Art's transfiguring essence subtly  
spann'd;

And from that song-cloud shaped as a  
man's hand

There comes the sound as of abundant  
rain.

##### LXI. THE SONG-THROE

By thine own tears thy song must tears  
beget,

O Singer! Magic mirror thou hast none  
Except thy manifest heart; and save

thine own  
Anguish or ardor, else no amulet.

Cisterned in Pride, verse is the feathery  
jet

Of soulless air-flung fountains; nay,  
more dry

Than the Dead Sea for throats that thirst  
and sigh,

That song o'er which no singer's lids  
grew wet.

The Song-god — He the Sun-god — is no  
slave

Of thine : thy Hunter he, who for thy soul  
Fledges his shaft : to no august control  
Of thy skilled hand his quivered store he  
gave :

But if thy lips' loud cry leap to his smart,  
The inspir'd recoil shall pierce thy  
brother's heart.

LXV. KNOWN IN VAIN

As two whose love, first foolish, widen-  
ing scope,

Knows suddenly, to music high and soft,  
The Holy of holies ; who because they  
scoff'd

Are now amazed with shame, nor dare  
to cope

With the whole truth aloud, lest heaven  
should ope ;

Yet, at their meetings, laugh not as they  
laugh'd

In speech ; nor speak, at length ; but  
sitting oft

Together, within hopeless sight of hope  
For hours are silent : — So it happeneth  
When Work and Will awake too late, to  
gaze

After their life sailed by, and hold their  
breath.

Ah ! who shall dare to search through what  
sad maze

Thenceforth their incommunicable ways  
Follow the desultory feet of Death ?

LXVI. THE HEART OF THE NIGHT

FROM child to youth ; from youth to  
arduous man ;

From lethargy to fever of the heart ;

From faithful life to dream-dowered days  
apart ;

From trust to doubt ; from doubt to  
brink of ban ; —

Thus much of change in one swift cycle  
ran

Till now. Alas, the soul ! — how soon  
must she

Accept her primal immortality, —

The flesh resume its dust whence it be-  
gan ?

O Lord of work and peace ! O Lord of  
life !

O Lord, the awful Lord of will ! though  
late,

Even yet renew this soul with duteous  
breath :

That when the peace is garnered in from  
strife,

The work retrieved, the will regenerate,  
This soul may see thy face, O Lord of  
death !

LXVII. THE LANDMARK

WAS *that* the landmark ? What — the  
foolish well

Whose wave, low down, I did not stoop  
to drink,

But sat and flung the pebbles from its  
brink

In sport to send its imaged skies pell-  
mell,

(And mine own image, had I noted  
well ! ) —

Was that my point of turning ? — I had  
thought

The stations of my course should rise un-  
sought,

As altar-stone or ensigned citadel.

But lo ! the path is missed, I must go  
back,

And thirst to drink when next I reach  
the spring

Which once I stained, which since may  
have grown black.

Yet though no light be left nor bird now  
sing

As here I turn, I'll thank God, hasten-  
ing,

That the same goal is still on the same  
track.

LXX. THE HILL SUMMIT

THIS feast-day of the sun, his altar there  
In the broad west has blazed for vesper-  
song ;

And I have loitered in the vale too long

And gaze now a belated worshipper.

Yet may I not forget that I was 'ware,

So journeying, of his face at intervals

Transfigured where the fringed horizon  
falls, —

A fiery bush with coruscating hair.

And now that I have climbed and won  
this height,

I must tread downward through the  
sloping shade



And travel the bewildered tracks till  
 night.  
 Yet for this hour I still may here be  
 stayed  
 And see the gold air and the silver fade  
 And the last bird fly into the last light.

## LXXI. THE CHOICE — I

EAT thou and drink; to-morrow thou  
 shalt die.  
 Surely the earth, that's wise being very  
 old,  
 Needs not our help. Then loose me,  
 love, and hold  
 Thy sultry hair up from my face; that I  
 May pour for thee this golden wine,  
 brim-high,  
 Till round the glass thy fingers glow like  
 gold.  
 We'll drown all hours: thy song, while  
 hours are toll'd,  
 Shall leap, as fountains veil the chang-  
 ing sky.  
 Now kiss, and think that there are really  
 those,  
 My own high-bosomed beauty, who  
 increase  
 Vain gold, vain lore, and yet might  
 choose our way!  
 Through many years they toil; then on  
 a day  
 They die not, — for their life was death,  
 — but cease;  
 And round their narrow lips the mould  
 falls close.

## LXXII. THE CHOICE — II

WATCH thou and fear; to-morrow thou  
 shalt die.  
 Or art thou sure thou shalt have time  
 for death?  
 Is not the day which God's word promis-  
 eth  
 To come man knows not when? In  
 yonder sky,  
 Now while we speak, the sun speeds forth:  
 can I  
 Or thou assure him of his goal? God's  
 breath  
 Even at this moment haply quickeneth  
 The air to a flame; till spirits, always  
 nigh  
 Though screened and hid, shall walk  
 the daylight here.

And dost thou prate of all that man  
 shall do?  
 Canst thou, who hast but plagues, pre-  
 sume to be  
 Glad in his gladness that comes after thee?  
 Will *his* strength slay *thy* worm in Hell?  
 Go to:  
 Cover thy countenance, and watch, and  
 fear.

## LXXIII. THE CHOICE — III

THINK thou and act; to-morrow thou  
 shalt die.  
 Outstretched in the sun's warmth upon  
 the shore,  
 Thou say'st: "Man's measured path is  
 all gone o'er:  
 Up all his years, steeply, with strain  
 and sigh,  
 Man clomb until he touched the truth;  
 and I,  
 Even I, am he whom it was destined for."  
 How should this be? Art thou then so  
 much more  
 Than they who sowed, that thou shouldst  
 reap thereby?  
 Nay, come up hither. From this wave-  
 washed mound  
 Unto the furthest flood-brim look with  
 me;  
 Then reach on with thy thought till it be  
 drown'd.  
 Miles and miles distant though the last  
 line be,  
 And though thy soul sail leagues and  
 leagues beyond, —  
 Still, leagues beyond those leagues, there  
 is more sea.

## LXXIV. OLD AND NEW ART — I

## ST. LUKE THE PAINTER

GIVE honor unto Luke Evangelist;  
 For he it was (the aged legends say)  
 Who first taught Art to fold her hands  
 and pray.  
 Scarcely at once she dared to rend the  
 mist  
 Of devious symbols; but soon having  
 wist  
 How sky-breadth and field-silence and  
 this day  
 Are symbols also in some deeper way,  
 She looked through these to God and  
 was God's priest.

And if, past noon, her toil began to irk,  
 And she sought talismans, and turned in  
     vain  
 To soulless self-reflections of man's  
     skill, —  
 Yet now, in this the twilight, she might  
     still  
 Kneel in the latter grass to pray again,  
 Ere the night cometh and she may not  
     work.

## LXXV. OLD AND NEW ART — II

## NOT AS THESE

"I AM not as these are," the poet saith  
 In youth's pride, and the painter, among  
     men  
 At bay, where never pencil comes nor pen,  
 And shut about with his own frozen  
     breath.  
 To others, for whom only rhyme wins  
     faith  
 As poets, — only paint as painters, —  
     then  
 He turns in the cold silence; and again  
 Shrinking, "I am not as these are," he  
     saith.  
 And say that this is so, what follows it?  
 For were thine eyes set backwards in  
     thine head,  
 Such words were well; but they see on,  
     and far.  
 Unto the lights of the great Past, new-lit  
 Fair for the Future's track, look thou  
     instead, —  
 Say thou instead, "I am not as *these*  
     are."

## LXXVI. OLD AND NEW ART — III

## THE HUSBANDMAN

THOUGH God, as one that is an house-  
     holder,  
 Called these to labor in his vineyard first,  
 Before the husk of darkness was well  
     burst  
 Bidding them grope their way out and  
     bestir,  
 (Who, questioned of their wages, an-  
     swered, "Sir,  
 Unto each man a penny:") though the  
     worst  
 Burthen of heat was theirs and the dry  
     thirst:  
 Though God hath since found none such  
     as these were

To do their work like them: — Because  
     of this  
 Stand not ye idle in the market-place.  
 Which of ye knoweth *he* is not that last  
 Who may be first by faith and will? —  
     yea, his  
 The hand which after the appointed  
     days  
 And hours shall give a Future to their  
     Past?

## LXXVII. SOUL'S BEAUTY

## (Sibylla Palmifera)

UNDER the arch of Life, where love and  
     death,  
 Terror and mystery, guard her shrine, I  
     saw  
 Beauty enthroned; and though her gaze  
     struck awe,  
 I drew it in as simply as my breath.  
 Hers are the eyes which, over and  
     beneath,  
 The sky and sea bend on thee, — which  
     can draw,  
 By sea or sky or woman, to one law,  
 The allotted bondman of her palm and  
     wreath.  
 This is that Lady Beauty, in whose praise  
 Thy voice and hand shake still; — long  
     known to thee  
 By flying hair and fluttering hem, — the  
     beat  
 Following her daily of thy heart and feet,  
 How passionately and irretrievably,  
 In what fond flight, how many ways and  
     days!

## LXXVIII. BODY'S BEAUTY

## (Lilith)

OF Adam's first wife, Lilith, it is told  
 (The witch he loved before the gift of  
     Eve.)  
 That, ere the snake's, her sweet tongue  
     could deceive,  
 And her enchanted hair was the first gold.  
 And still she sits, young while the earth  
     is old,  
 And, subtly of herself contemplative,  
 Draws men to watch the bright web she  
     can weave,  
 Till heart and body and life are in its  
     hold.  
 The rose and poppy are her flowers; for  
     where

he not found, O Lilith, whom shed  
scent  
and soft-shed kisses and soft sleep shall  
snare?  
o! as that youth's eyes burned at  
thine, so went  
thy spell through him, and left his  
straight neck bent  
and round his heart one strangling  
golden hair.

## LXXXI. MEMORIAL THRESHOLDS

WHAT place so strange, — though unre-  
vealed snow  
With unimaginable fires arise  
at the earth's end, — what passion of  
surprise  
like frost-bound fire-girt scenes of long  
ago?  
o! this is none but I this hour; and lo!  
this is the very place which to mine  
eyes  
those mortal hours in vain immortalize,  
mid hurrying crowds, with what alone  
I know.  
ity, of thine a single simple door,  
y some new Power reduplicate, must be  
even yet my life-porch in eternity,  
even with one presence filled, as once of  
yore:  
r mocking winds whirl round a chaff-  
strown floor  
thee and thy years and these my words  
and me.

## LXXXII. HOARDED JOY

SAID: "Nay, pluck not, — let the first  
fruit be;  
even as thou sayest, it is sweet and red,  
but let it ripen still. The tree's bent  
head  
rees in the stream its own fecundity  
and bides the day of fulness. Shall  
not we  
at the sun's hour that day possess the  
shade,  
and claim our fruit before its ripeness  
fade,  
and eat it from the branch and praise the  
tree?"  
say: "Alas! our fruit hath wooed the  
sun  
too long, — 'tis fallen and floats adown  
the stream.

Lo, the last clusters! Pluck them every  
one,  
And let us sup with summer; ere the  
gleam  
Of autumn set the year's pent sorrow  
free,  
And the woods wail like echoes from the  
sea."

## LXXXIII. BARREN SPRING

ONCE more the changed year's turning  
wheel returns:  
And as a girl sails balanced in the wind,  
And now before and now again behind  
Stoops as it swoops, with cheek that  
laughs and burns, —  
So Spring comes merry towards me here,  
but earns  
No answering smile from me, whose life  
is twin'd  
With the dead boughs that winter still  
must bind,  
And whom to-day the Spring no more  
concerns.  
Behold, this crocus is a withering flame;  
This snowdrop, snow; this apple-blos-  
som's part  
To breed the fruit that breeds the ser-  
pent's art.  
Nay, for these Spring-flowers, turn thy  
face from them,  
Nor stay till on the year's last lily-stem  
The white cup shrivels round the golden  
heart.

## LXXXIV. FAREWELL TO THE GLEN

SWEET stream-fed glen, why say "fare-  
well" to thee  
Who far'st so well and find'st for ever  
smooth  
The brow of Time where man may read  
no ruth?  
Nay, do thou rather say "farewell" to  
me,  
Who now fare forth in bitterer fantasy  
Than erst was mine where other shade  
might soothe  
By other streams, what while in fragrant  
youth  
The bliss of being sad made melancholy.  
And yet, farewell! For better shalt thou  
fare  
When children bathe sweet faces in thy  
flow

And happy lovers blend sweet shadows  
there  
In hours to come, than when an hour ago  
Thine echoes had but one man's sighs to  
bear  
And thy trees whispered what he feared  
to know.

## LXXXVI. LOST DAYS

THE lost days of my life until to-day,  
What were they, could I see them on  
the street  
Lie as they fell? Would they be ears of  
wheat  
Sown once for food but trodden into clay?  
Or golden coins squandered and still to  
pay?  
Or drops of blood dabbling the guilty  
feet?  
Or such spilt water as in dreams must  
cheat  
The undying throats of Hell, athirst  
always?  
I do not see them here; but after death  
God knows I know the faces I shall see,  
Each one a murdered self, with low  
last breath.  
"I am thyself, — what hast thou done  
to me?"  
"And I — and I — thyself," (lo! each one  
saith,)  
"And thou thyself to all eternity!"

## LXXXIX. THE TREES OF THE GARDEN

YE who have passed Death's haggard  
hills; and ye  
Whom trees that knew your sires shall  
cease to know  
And still stand silent: — is it all a show, —  
A wisp that laughs upon the wall? —  
decree  
Of some inexorable supremacy  
Which ever, as man strains his blind  
surmise  
From depth to ominous depth, looks  
past his eyes,  
Sphinx-faced with unabashed augury?  
Nay, rather question the Earth's self.  
Invoke  
The storm-felled forest-trees moss-grown  
to-day  
Whose roots are hillocks where the  
children play;  
Or ask the silver sapling 'neath what yoke

Those stars, his spray-crown's clustering  
gems, shall wage  
Their journey still when his bought  
shrink with age.

## XC. "RETRO ME, SATHANA!"

GET thee behind me. Even as, heavy  
curled,  
Stooping against the wind, a charioteer  
Is snatched from out his chariot by the  
hair,  
So shall Time be; and as the void ca-  
hurled  
Abroad by reinless steeds, even so the  
world:  
Yea, even as chariot-dust upon the air,  
It shall be sought and not found any-  
where.  
Get thee behind me, Satan. Oft unfurled  
Thy perilous wings can beat and break  
like lath  
Much mightiness of men to win the  
praise.  
Leave these weak feet to tread in narrow  
ways.  
Thou still, upon the broad vine-sheltered  
path,  
Mayst wait the turning of the phials of  
wrath  
For certain years, for certain months  
and days.

## XCI. LOST ON BOTH SIDES

As when two men have loved a woman  
well,  
Each hating each, through Love's an-  
Death's deceit;  
Since not for either this stark marriage-  
sheet  
And the long pauses of this wedding-bell  
Yet o'er her grave the night and day  
dispel  
At last their feud forlorn, with cold an-  
heat  
Nor other than dear friends to death mar-  
fleet  
The two lives left that most of her ca-  
tell: —  
So separate hopes, which in a soul ha-  
wooded  
The one same Peace, strove with each  
other long,  
And Peace before their faces perished  
since;

through that soul, in restless brother-  
hood,  
they roam together now, and wind  
among  
the bye-streets, knocking at the dusty  
inns.

## XCIV. MICHELANGELO'S KISS

GREAT Michelangelo, with age grown  
bleak  
and uttermost labors, having once o'er-  
said  
grievous memories on his long life  
shed,  
his worst regret to one true heart could  
speak :—  
that when, with sorrowing love and rever-  
ence meek,  
he stooped o'er sweet Colonna's dying  
bed,  
his Muse and dominant Lady, spirit-  
wed, —  
her hand he kissed, but not her brow or  
cheek.  
Buonarrotti, — good at Art's fire-  
wheels  
urge her chariot! — even thus the  
Soul,  
touching at length some sorely-chastened  
goal,  
turns oftenest but a little : her appeals  
were deep and mute, — lowly her claim.  
Let be :  
that holds for her Death's garner?  
And for thee?

## XCVI. LIFE THE BELOVED

thy friend's face, with shadow of soul  
o'erspread,  
methwhile unto thy sight perchance hath  
been  
fast and strange, yet never so is  
seen  
thought, but to all fortunate favor wed ;  
thy love's death-bound features never  
dead  
memory's glass return, but con-  
travene  
all fugitive days, and alway keep, I  
ween,  
an all new life a livelier lovelihead : —  
Life herself, thy spirit's friend and love,  
even still as Spring's authentic harbinger  
dawns with fresh hours for hope to glorify ;

Though pale she lay when in the winter  
grove  
Her funeral flowers were snow-flakes shed  
on her  
And the red wings of frost-fire rent the  
sky.

## XCVII. A SUPERScription

LOOK in my face ; my name is Might-  
have-been ;  
I am also called No-more, Too-late, Fare-  
well ;  
Unto thine ear I hold the dead-sea shell  
Cast up thy Life's foam-fretted feet be-  
tween ;  
Unto thine eyes the glass where that is  
seen  
Which had Life's form and Love's, but  
by my spell  
Is now a shaken shadow intolerable,  
Of ultimate things unuttered the frail  
screen.  
Mark me, how still I am ! But should  
there dart  
One moment through thy soul the soft  
surprise  
Of that winged Peace which lulls the  
breath of sighs, —  
Then shalt thou see me smile, and turn  
apart  
Thy visage to mine ambush at thy heart  
Sleepless with cold commemorative eyes.

## XCIX. NEWBORN DEATH — I

TO-DAY Death seems to me an infant child  
Which her worn mother Life upon my knee  
Has set to grow my friend and play with  
me ;  
If haply so my heart might be beguil'd  
To find no terrors in a face so mild, —  
If haply so my weary heart might be  
Unto the newborn milky eyes of thee,  
O Death, before resentment reconcil'd.  
How long, O Death ? And shall thy feet  
depart  
Still a young child's with mine, or wilt  
thou stand  
Fullgrown the helpful daughter of my  
heart,  
What time with thee indeed I reach the  
strand  
Of the pale wave which knows thee what  
thou art,  
And drink it in the hollow of thy hand ?



## C. NEWBORN DEATH — II

AND thou, O Life, the lady of all bliss,  
 With whom, when our first heart beat  
     full and fast,  
 I wandered till the haunts of men were  
     pass'd,  
 And in fair places found all bowers amiss  
 Till only woods and waves might hear  
     our kiss,  
 While to the winds all thought of Death  
     we cast :—  
 Ah, Life! and must I have from thee at  
     last  
 No smile to greet me and no babe but  
     this?  
 Lo! Love, the child once ours; and  
     Song, whose hair  
 Blew like a flame and blossomed like a  
     wreath;  
 And Art, whose eyes were worlds by God  
     found fair;  
 These o'er the book of Nature mixed their  
     breath  
 With neck-twined arms, as oft we watched  
     them there :  
 And did these die that thou mightst bear  
     me Death?

## CI. THE ONE HOPE

WHEN vain desire at last and vain regret  
 Go hand in hand to death, and all is vain,  
 What shall assuage the unforgotten pain  
 And teach the forgetful to forget?  
 Shall Peace be still a sunk stream long  
     unmet, —  
 Or may the soul at once in a green plain  
 Stoop through the spray of some sweet  
     life-fountain  
 And cull the dew-drenched flowering  
     amulet?  
 Ah! when the wan soul in that golden air  
 Between the scripted petals softly  
     blown  
 Peers breathless for the gift of grace  
     unknown,  
 Ah! let none other alien spell soe'er  
 But only the one Hope's one name be  
     there, —  
 Not less nor more, but even that word  
     alone.      1869, 1870, 1881.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Sixteen Sonnets, Numbers 25, 39, 47, 49–52, 63, 65, 67, 86, 91, 95, 97, 99, 100, were published in the *Fortnightly Review*, 1869. Fifty Sonnets (for the exact list see W. M. Rossetti's edition of the *Collected Works*, I. 517) were published, with eleven

## THREE SHADOWS

I looked and saw your eyes  
 In the shadow of your hair,  
 As a traveller sees the stream  
 In the shadow of the wood;  
 And I said, "My faint heart sighs,  
 Ah me! to linger there,  
 To drink deep and to dream  
 In that sweet solitude."

I looked and saw your heart  
 In the shadow of your eyes,  
 As a seeker sees the gold  
 In the shadow of the stream;  
 And I said, "Ah me? what art  
 Should win the immortal prize,  
 Whose want must make life cold  
 And Heaven a hollow dream?"

I looked and saw your love  
 In the shadow of your heart,  
 As a diver sees the pearl  
 In the shadow of the sea;  
 And I murmured, not above  
 My breath, but all apart, —  
 "Ah! you can love, true girl,  
 And is your love for me?" 1881

## INSOMNIA

THIN are the night-skirts left behind  
 By daybreak hours that onward creep  
 And thin, alas! the shred of sleep  
 That wavers with the spirit's wind:  
 But in half-dreams that shift and roll  
 And still remember and forget,  
 My soul this hour has drawn your soul  
     A little nearer yet.

Our lives, most dear, are never near,  
 Our thoughts are never far apart,  
 Though all that draws us heart to heart  
 Seems fainter now and now more clear.  
 To-night Love claims his full control,  
 And with desire and with regret  
 My soul this hour has drawn your soul  
     A little nearer yet.

Is there a home where heavy earth  
 Melts to bright air that breathes no  
     pain,

lyrics, as "Sonnets and Songs towards a work to be entitled *The House of Life*," in the *Poems*, 1870. *The House of Life*, as it now stands, consisting of sonnets only, was published in *Ballads and Sonnets* 1881.

Where water leaves no thirst again  
 And springing fire is Love's new birth?  
 Faith long bound to one true goal  
 May there at length its hope beget,  
 Thy soul that hour shall draw your soul  
 For ever nearer yet. 1881.

## SOOTHSAY

Let no man ask thee of anything  
 Not yearborn between Spring and Spring.  
 Fore of all worlds than he can know,  
 Each day the single sun doth show.  
 Trustier gloss than thou canst give  
 From all wise scrolls demonstrative,  
 The sea doth sigh and the wind sing.

Let no man awe thee on any height  
 Of earthly kingship's mouldering might.  
 The dust his heel holds meet for thy brow  
 Hath all of it been what both are now;  
 And thou and he may plague together  
 Beggar's eyes in some dusty weather  
 When none that is now knows sound or  
 sight.

Crave thou no dower of earthly things  
 Unworthy Hope's imaginings.  
 To have brought true birth of Song to be  
 And to have won hearts to Poesy,  
 Anywhere in the sun or rain  
 To have loved and been beloved again,  
 The loftiest reach of Hope's bright wings.

The wild waifs cast up by the sea  
 Are diverse ever seasonably.  
 Even so the soul-tides still may land  
 In different drift upon the sand.  
 At one the sea is evermore:  
 And one be still, 'twixt shore and shore,  
 The sea's life, thy soul in thee.

Why hast thou pride? How then may fit  
 Thy mood with flatterer's silk-spun wit?  
 Apply the sweet voice lifts thy crest,  
 The breeze of fame made manifest.  
 Nay, but then chaf'st at flattery? Pause:  
 Be sure thy wrath is not because  
 It makes thee feel thou lovest it.

Let thy soul strive that still the same  
 Be early friendship's sacred flame.  
 The affinities have strongest part  
 In youth, and draw men heart to heart:  
 Life wears on and finds no rest,  
 The individual in each breast  
 Tyrannous to sunder them.

In the life-drama's stern cue-call,  
 A friend's a part well-prized by all:  
 And if thou meet an enemy,  
 What art thou that none such should be?  
 Even so: but if the two parts run  
 Into each other and grow one,  
 Then comes the curtain's cue to fall.

Whate'er by other's need is claimed  
 More than by thine, — to him unblamed  
 Resign it: and if he should hold  
 What more than he thou lack'st, bread,  
 gold,  
 Or any good whereby we live, —  
 To thee such substance let him give  
 Freely: nor he nor thou be shamed.

Strive that thy works prove equal: lest  
 That work which thou hast done the best  
 Should come to be to thee at length  
 (Even as to envy seems the strength  
 Of others) hateful and abhorr'd, —  
 Thine own above thyself made lord, —  
 Of self-rebuke the bitterest.

Unto the man of yearning thought  
 And aspiration, to do nought  
 Is in itself almost an act, —  
 Being chasm-fire and cataract  
 Of the soul's utter depths unseal'd.  
 Yet woe to thee if once thou yield  
 Unto the act of doing nought!

How callous seems beyond revoke  
 The clock with its last listless stroke!  
 How much too late at length! — to trace  
 The hour on its forewarning face,  
 The thing thou hast not dared to do! . . .  
 Behold, this *may* be thus! Ere true  
 It prove, arise and bear thy yoke.

Let lore of all Theology  
 Be to thy soul what it *can* be:  
 But know, — the Power that fashions man  
 Measured not out thy little span  
 For thee to take the meting-rod  
 In turn, and so approve on God  
 Thy science of Theometry.

To God at best, to Chance at worst,  
 Give thanks for good things, last as first.  
 But windstrown blossom is that good  
 Whose apple is not gratitude.  
 Even if no prayer uplift thy face,  
 Let the sweet right to render grace  
 As thy soul's cherished child be nurs'd.

Didst ever say, "Lo, I forget?"  
 Such thought was to remember yet.  
 As in a gravegarth, count to see  
 The monuments of memory.  
 Be this thy soul's appointed scope: —  
 Gaze onward without claim to hope,  
 Nor, gazing backward, court regret.  
 1881.

## ON BURNS

IN whomsoe'er, since Poesy began,  
 A Poet most of all men we may scan,  
 Burns of all poets is the most a Man.  
 1886.

## FIVE ENGLISH POETS

## I. THOMAS CHATTERTON

WITH Shakespeare's manhood at a boy's  
 wild heart, —  
 Through Hamlet's doubt to Shakespeare  
 near allied,  
 And kin to Milton through his Satan's  
 pride, —  
 At Death's sole door he stooped, and  
 craved a dart;  
 And to the dear new bower of England's  
 art, —  
 Even to that shrine Time else had deified,  
 The unuttered heart that soared against  
 his side, —  
 Drove the fell point, and smote life's  
 seals apart.  
 Thy nested home-loves, noble Chatter-  
 ton;  
 The angel-trodden stair thy soul could  
 trace  
 Up Redcliffe's spire; and in the world's  
 armed space  
 Thy gallant sword-play: — these to many  
 an one  
 Are sweet for ever; as thy grave unknown  
 And love-dream of thine unrecorded face.

## II. WILLIAM BLAKE

(TO FREDERICK SHIELDS, ON HIS SKETCH OF  
 BLAKE'S WORK-ROOM AND DEATH-ROOM,  
 3 FOUNTAIN COURT, STRAND.)

THIS is the place. Even here the daunt-  
 less soul,  
 The unflinching hand, wrought on; till  
 in that nook,  
 As on that very bed, his life partook

New birth, and passed. Yon river's  
 dusky shoal,  
 Whereto the close-built coiling lanes un-  
 roll,  
 Faced his work-window, whence his eyes  
 would stare,  
 Thought-wandering, unto nought that  
 met them there,  
 But to the unfettered irreversible goal.  
 This cupboard, Holy of Holies, held the  
 cloud  
 Of his soul writ and limned; this other one,  
 His true wife's charge, full oft to their  
 abode  
 Yielded for daily bread the martyr's stone,  
 Ere yet their food might be that Bread  
 alone,  
 The words now home-speech of the  
 mouth of God.

## III. SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

HIS Soul fared forth (as from the deep  
 home-grove  
 The father-songster plies the hour-long  
 quest,)  
 To feed his soul-brood hungering in the  
 nest;  
 But his warm Heart, the mother-bird,  
 above  
 Their callow fledgling progeny still hove  
 With tented roof of wings and fostering  
 breast  
 Till the Soul fed the soul-brood. Richly  
 blest  
 From Heaven their growth, whose food  
 was Human Love.  
 Yet ah! Like desert pools that show  
 the stars  
 Once in long leagues, — even such the  
 scarce-snatched hours  
 Which deepening pain left to his lord-  
 liest powers: —  
 Heaven lost through spider-trammelled  
 prison-bars.  
 Six years, from sixty saved! Yet kin-  
 dling skies  
 Own them, a beacon to our centuries.

## IV. JOHN KEATS

THE weltering London ways where chil-  
 dren weep  
 And girls whom none call maidens laugh,  
 — strange road  
 Miring his outward steps, who inly trode

the bright Castalian brink and Latmos'  
steep: —  
even such his life's cross-paths; till  
deathly deep  
he toiled through sands of Lethe; and  
long pain,  
weary with labor spurned and love found  
vain,  
dead Rome's sheltering shadow  
wrapped his sleep.  
pang-dowered Poet, whose reverber-  
ant lips  
and heart-strung lyre awoke the Moon's  
eclipse, —  
thou whom the daisies glory in grow-  
ing o'er, —  
their fragrance clings around thy name,  
not writ  
in rumor'd in water, while the fame  
of it  
long Time's flood goes echoing ever-  
more.

V. PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

SCRIPTION FOR THE COUCH, STILL PRESERVED,  
ON WHICH HE PASSED THE LAST NIGHT OF HIS  
LIFE.)

WIXT those twin worlds, — the world of  
Sleep, which gave  
to dream to warn, — the tidal world of  
Death,  
which the earth's sea, as the earth, re-  
plenisheth, —  
Shelley, Song's orient sun, to breast the  
wave,  
rose from this couch that morn. Ah!  
did he brave  
ly the sea? — or did man's deed of  
hell  
gulf his bark 'mid mists impene-  
trable? . . .  
eye discerned, nor any power might  
save.  
men that mist cleared, O Shelley!  
what dread veil  
as rent for thee, to whom far-darling  
Truth  
signed sovereign guide through thy  
brief ageless youth?  
as the Truth *thy* Truth, Shelley? —  
Hush! All-Hail,  
st doubt, thou gav'st it; and in Truth's  
bright sphere  
t first of praiser, being most praised  
here.

1881.

## THE KING'S TRAGEDY

JAMES I OF SCOTS. — 20TH FEBRUARY,  
1437.

I CATHERINE am a Douglas born,  
A name to all Scots dear;  
And Kate Barlass they've called me now  
Through many a waning year.

This old arm's withered now. 'Twas once  
Most deft 'mong maidens all  
To rein the steed, to wing the shaft,  
To smite the palm-play ball.

In hall adown the close-linked dance  
It has shone most white and fair;  
It has been the rest for a true lord's head,  
And many a sweet babe's nursing-bed,  
And the bar to a King's chambère.

Aye, lasses, draw round Kate Barlass,  
And hark with bated breath  
How good King James, King Robert's son,  
Was foully done to death.

Through all the days of his gallant youth  
The princely James was pent,  
By his friends at first and then by his foes,  
In long imprisonment.

For the elder Prince, the kingdom's heir,  
By treason's murderous brood  
Was slain; and the father quaked for the  
child  
With the royal mortal blood.

I' the Bass Rock fort, by his father's care,  
Was his childhood's life assured;  
And Henry the subtle Bolingbroke,  
Proud England's King, 'neath the south-  
ron yoke  
His youth for long years immured.

Yet in all things meet for a kingly man  
Himself did he approve;  
And the nightingale through his prison-  
wall  
Taught him both love and love.

For once, when the bird's song drew him  
close  
To the opened window-pane,  
In her bowers beneath a lady stood,  
A light of life to his sorrowful mood,  
Like a lily amid the rain.

And for her sake, to the sweet bird's  
note,  
He framed a sweeter Song,  
More sweet than ever a poet's heart  
Gave yet to the English tongue.

She was a lady of royal blood ;  
And when, past sorrow and teen,  
He stood where still through his crown-  
less years  
His Scottish realm had been,  
At Scone were the happy lovers crowned,  
A heart-wed King and Queen.

But the bird may fall from the bough of  
youth,  
And song be turned to moan,  
And Love's storm-cloud be the shadow  
of Hate,  
When the tempest-waves of a troubled  
State  
Are beating against a throne.

Yet well they loved; and the god of  
Love,  
Whom well the King had sung,  
Might find on the earth no truer hearts  
His lowliest swains among.

From the days when first she rode abroad  
With Scottish maids in her train,  
I Catherine Douglas won the trust  
Of my mistress, sweet Queen Jane.

And oft she sighed, "To be born a King!"  
And oft along the way  
When she saw the homely lovers pass  
She has said, "Alack the day!"

Years waned, — the loving and toiling  
years :  
Till England's wrong renewed  
Drove James, by outrage cast on his  
crown,  
To the open field of feud.

'Twas when the King and his host were  
met  
At the leaguer of Roxbro' hold,  
The Queen o' the sudden sought his camp  
With a tale of dread to be told.

And she showed him a secret letter writ  
That spoke of treasonous strife,  
And how a band of his noblest lords  
Were sworn to take his life.

"And it may be here or it may be there  
In the camp or the court," she said :  
"But for my sake come to your people  
arms  
And guard your royal head."

Quoth he, "'Tis the fifteenth day of the  
siege,  
And the castle's nigh to yield."  
"O face your foes on your throne," she  
cried,  
"And show the power you wield ;  
And under your Scottish people's love  
You shalt sit as under your shield."

At the fair Queen's side I stood that  
day  
When he bade them raise the siege,  
And back to his Court he sped to know  
How the lords would meet their Liege.

But when he summoned his Parliament  
The louring brows hung round,  
Like clouds that circle the mountain  
head  
Ere the first low thunders sound.

For he had tamed the nobles' lust  
And curbed their power and pride,  
And reached out an arm to right the  
poor  
Through Scotland far and wide ;  
And many a lordly wrong-doer  
By the headsman's axe had died.

'Twas then upspoke Sir Robert Græme,  
The bold o'ermastering man : —  
"O King, in the name of your Three E-  
states  
I set you under their ban !

"For, as your lords made oath to you  
Of service and fealty,  
Even in likewise you pledged your oath  
Their faithful sire to be : —

"Yet all we here that are nobly sprung  
Have mourned dear kith and kin  
Since first for the Scottish Barons' curse  
Did your bloody rule begin."

With that he laid his hands on his King : —  
"Is this not so, my lords?"  
But of all who had sworn to league with  
him  
Not one spake back to his words.



oth the King:—"Thou speak'st but  
for one Estate,  
Nor doth it avow thy gage.  
t my liege lords hale this traitor hence!"  
The Græme fired dark with rage:—  
Who works for lesser men than himself,  
He earns but a witless wage!"

t soon from the dungeon where he lay  
He won by privy plots,  
d forth he fled with a price on his head  
To the country of the Wild Scots.

d word there came from Sir Robert  
Græme  
To the King at Edinbro':—  
To Liege of mine thou art; but I see  
om this day forth alone in thee  
God's creature, my mortal foe.

through thee are my wife and children  
lost,  
My heritage and lands;  
d when my God shall show me a way,  
yself my mortal foe will I slay  
With these my proper hands."

ainst the coming of Christmastide  
That year the King bade call  
The Black Friars' Charterhouse of Perth  
A solemn festival.

d we of his household rode with him  
In a close-ranked company;  
t not till the sun had sunk from his  
throne  
Did we reach the Scottish Sea.

at eve was clenched for a boding storm,  
Neath a toilsome moon half seen;  
e cloud stooped low and the surf rose  
high;

d where there was a line of the sky,  
Wild wings loomed dark between.

d on a rock of the black beach-side  
By the veiled moon dimly lit,  
ere was something seemed to heave  
with life  
As the King drew nigh to it.

d was it only the tossing furze  
Or brake of the waste sea-wold?  
was it an eagle bent to the blast?  
en near we came, we knew it at last  
For a woman tattered and old.

But it seemed as though by a fire within  
Her writhen limbs were wrung;  
And as soon as the King was close to her,  
She stood up gaunt and strong.

'Twas then the moon sailed clear of the  
rack  
On high in her hollow dome;  
And still as aloft with hoary crest  
Each clamorous wave rang home,  
Like fire in snow the moonlight blazed  
Amid the champing foam.

And the woman held his eyes with her  
eyes:—  
"O King, thou art come at last;  
But thy wraith has haunted the Scottish  
Sea  
To my sight for four years past.

"Four years it is since first I met,  
"Twixt the Duchray and the Dhu,  
A shape whose feet clung close in a shroud,  
And that shape for thine I knew.

"A year again, and on Inchkeith Isle  
I saw thee pass in the breeze,  
With the cerecloth risen above thy feet  
And wound about thy knees.

"And yet a year, in the Links of Forth,  
As a wanderer without rest,  
Thou cam'st with both thine arms i' the  
shroud  
That clung high up thy breasts.

"And in this hour I find thee here,  
And well mine eyes may note  
That the winding-sheet hath passed thy  
breast  
And risen around thy throat.

"And when I meet thee again, O King,  
That of death hast such sore drouth,—  
Except thou turn again on this shore,—  
The winding-sheet shall have moved  
once more  
And covered thine eyes and mouth.

"O King, whom poor men bless for their  
King,  
Of thy fate be not so fain;  
But these my words for God's message  
take,  
And turn thy steed, O King, for her sake  
Who rides beside thy rein!"

While the woman spoke, the King's  
horse reared

As if it would breast the sea,  
And the Queen turned pale as she heard  
on the gale

The voice die dolorously.

When the Woman ceased, the steed was  
still,

But the King gazed on her yet,  
And in silence save for the wail of the sea  
His eyes and her eyes met.

At last he said:—"God's ways are His  
own;

Man is but shadow and dust.  
Last night I prayed by His altar-stone;  
To-night I wend to the feast of His Son;  
And in Him I set my trust.

"I have held my people in sacred charge,  
And have not feared the sting  
Of proud men's hate,—to His will resign'd  
Who has but one same death for a hind  
And one same death for a King.

"And if God in His wisdom have brought  
close

The day when I must die,  
That day by water or fire or air  
My feet shall fall in the destined snare  
Wherever my road may lie.

"What man can say but the Fiend hath  
set

Thy sorcery on my path,  
My heart with the fear of death to fill,  
And turn me against God's very will  
To sink in His burning wrath?"

The woman stood as the train rode past,  
And moved nor limb nor eye;  
And when we were shipped, we saw her  
there

Still standing against the sky.

As the ship made way, the moon once  
more

Sank slow in her rising pall;  
And I thought of the shrouded wraith  
of the King,

And I said, "The Heavens know all."

And now, ye lasses, must ye hear  
How my name is Kate Barlass:—  
But a little thing, when all the tale

Is told of the weary mass  
Of crime and woe which in Scotland  
realm

God's will let come to pass.

'Twas in the Charterhouse of Perth  
That the King and all his Court  
Were met, the Christmas Feast being  
done,  
For solace and disport.

'Twas a wind-wild eve in February,  
And against the casement-pane  
The branches smote like summoning  
hands  
And muttered the driving rain.

And when the wind swooped over the  
lift  
And made the whole heaven frown,  
It seemed a grip was laid on the walls  
To tug the housetop down.

And the Queen was there, more stately  
fair

Than a lily in garden set;  
And the king was loth to stir from her  
side;  
For as on the day when she was his  
bride,  
Even so he loved her yet.

And the Earl of Athole, the King's faithful  
friend,

Sat with him at the board;  
And Robert Stuart the chamberlain  
Who had sold his sovereign Lord.

Yet the traitor Christopher Chaumbray  
there

Would fain have told him all,  
And vainly four times that night he strove  
To reach the King through the hall.

But the wine is bright at the goblet's  
brim

Though the poison lurk beneath;  
And the apples still are red on the tree  
Within whose shade may the adder be  
That shall turn thy life to death.

There was a knight of the King's faithful  
friends

Whom he called the King of Love;  
And to such bright cheer and courtesy  
That name might best behave.

and the King and Queen both loved him  
 well  
 For his gentle knightliness;  
 and with him the King, as that eve  
 wore on,  
 Was playing at the chess.

and the King said, (for he thought to  
 jest  
 And soothe the Queen thereby;) —  
 In a book 'tis writ that this same year  
 A King shall in Scotland die.

and I have pondered the matter o'er,  
 And this have I found, Sir Hugh, —  
 There are but two Kings on Scottish  
 ground,  
 And those Kings are I and you.

and I have a wife and a newborn heir,  
 And you are yourself alone;  
 Stand you stark at my side with me  
 To guard our double throne.

For here sit I and my wife and child,  
 As well your heart shall approve,  
 Full surrender and soothfastness,  
 Beneath your Kingdom of Love."

the Knight laughed, and the Queen  
 too smiled;  
 But I knew her heavy thought,  
 and I strove to find in the good King's  
 jest  
 What cheer might thence be wrought.

and I said, "My Liege, for the Queen's  
 dear love  
 Now sing the song that of old  
 you made, when a captive Prince you lay,  
 and the nightingale sang sweet on the  
 spray,  
 In Windsor's castle-hold."

When he smiled the smile I knew so well  
 When he thought to please the Queen;  
 the smile which under all bitter frowns  
 Of hate that rose between,  
 never dwelt at the poet's heart  
 like the bird of love unseen.

and he kissed her hand and took his  
 harp,  
 and the music sweetly rang;  
 and when the song burst forth, it seemed  
 I was the nightingale that sang.

*"Worship, ye lovers, on this May:  
 Of bliss your kalends are begun:  
 Sing with us, Away, Winter, away!  
 Come, Summer, the sweet season and sun!  
 Awake for shame, — your heaven is  
 won, —  
 And amorously your heads lift all:  
 Thank Love, that you to his grace doth  
 call!"*

But when he bent to the Queen, and  
 sang  
 The speech whose praise was hers,  
 It seemed his voice was the voice of the  
 Spring  
 And the voice of the bygone years.

*"The fairest and the freshest flower  
 That ever I saw before that hour,  
 The which o' the sudden made to start  
 The blood of my body to my heart.*

\* \* \* \* \*

*Alh sweet, are ye a worldly creature  
 Or heavenly thing in form of nature?"*

And the song was long, and richly stored  
 With wonder and beauteous things;  
 And the harp was tuned to every change  
 Of minstrel ministerings;  
 But when he spoke of the Queen at the  
 last,  
 Its strings were his own heart-strings.

*"Unworthy but only of her grace,  
 Upon Love's rock that's easy and sure,  
 In guerdon of all my love's space  
 She took me her humble creature.  
 Thus fell my blissful adventure  
 In youth of love that from day to day  
 Flowereth aye new, and further I say.*

*"To reckon all the circumstance  
 As it happed when lessen gan my sore,  
 Of my rancor and woful chance,  
 It were too long, — I have done therefor.  
 And of this flower I say no more  
 But unto my help her heart hath tended  
 And even from death her man defended."*

"Aye, even from death," to myself I  
 said;  
 For I thought of the day when she  
 Had borne him the news, at Roxbro'  
 siege,  
 Of the fell confederacy.

But Death even then took aim as he  
sang

With an arrow deadly bright;  
And the grinning skull lurked grimly  
aloof,

And the wings were spread far over the  
roof

More dark than the winter night.

Yet truly along the am'rous song  
Of Love's high pomp and state,  
There were words of Fortune's trackless  
doom

And the dreadful face of Fate.

And oft have I heard again in dreams  
The voice of dire appeal

In which the King then sang of the pit  
That is under Fortune's wheel.

*"And under the wheel beheld I there  
An ugly Pit as deep as hell,  
That to behold I quaked for fear:  
And this I heard, that who therein fell  
Came no more up, tidings to tell:  
Whereat, astound of the fearful sight,  
I wist not what to do for fright."*

And oft has my thought called up again  
These words of the changeful song:—  
*"Wist thou thy pain and thy travail  
To come, well might'st thou weep and wail!"*  
And our wail, O God! is long.

But the song's end was all of his love;  
And well his heart was grac'd  
With her smiling lips and her tear-bright  
eyes

As his arm went round her waist.

And on the swell of her long fair throat  
Close clung the necklet-chain  
As he bent her pearl-tir'd head aside,  
And in the warmth of his love and pride  
He kissed her lips full fain.

And her true face was a rosy red,  
The very red of the rose  
That, couched on the happy garden-bed,  
In the summer sunlight glows.

And all the wondrous things of love  
That sang so sweet through the song  
Were in the look that met in their eyes,  
And the look was deep and long.

'Twas then a knock came at the outer  
gate,

And the usher sought the King.  
"The woman you met by the Scottish  
Sea,

My Liege, would tell you a thing;  
And she says that her present need for  
speech

Will bear no gainsaying."

And the King said:—"The hour is late;  
To-morrow will serve, I ween."

Then he charged the usher strictly, and  
said:

"No word of this to the Queen."

But the usher came again to the King,  
"Shall I call her back?" quoth he:  
"For as she went on her way, she cried,  
'Woe! Woe! then the thing must  
be!'"

And the King paused, but he did not  
speak.

Then he called for the Voidee-cup:  
And as we heard the twelfth hour strike  
There by true lips and false lips alike  
Was the draught of trust drained up.

So with reverence meet to King and  
Queen,

To bed went all from the board;  
And the last to leave of the court  
train

Was Robert Stuart the chamberlain  
Who had sold his sovereign lord.

And all the locks of the chamber-door  
Had the traitor riven and brast;  
And that Fate might win sure way from  
afar,

He had drawn out every bolt and bar  
That made the entrance fast.

And now at midnight he stole his way  
To the moat of the outer wall,  
And laid strong hurdles closely across  
Where the traitors' tread should fall.

But we that were the Queen's bower  
maids

Alone were left behind;  
And with heed we drew the curtains  
close

Against the winter wind.

and now that all was still through the  
hall,  
More clearly we heard the rain  
that clamored ever against the glass  
And the boughs that beat on the pane.

at the fire was bright in the ingle-nook,  
And through empty space around  
the shadows cast on the arras'd wall  
did the pictured kings stood sudden and  
tall  
Like spectres sprung from the ground.

and the bed was dight in a deep alcove;  
And as he stood by the fire  
the king was still in talk with the Queen  
While he doffed his goodly attire.

and the song had brought the image  
back  
Of many a bygone year;  
and many a loving word they said  
with hand in hand and head laid to  
head;  
And none of us went anear.

at Love was weeping outside the house,  
A child in the piteous rain;  
and as he watched the arrow of Death,  
wailed for his own shafts close in the  
sheath  
That never should fly again.

and now beneath the window arose  
A wild voice suddenly:  
and the King reared straight, but the  
Queen fell back  
As for bitter dule to dree;  
and all of us knew the woman's voice  
Who spoke by the Scottish Sea.

O King," she cried, "in an evil hour  
They drove me from thy gate;  
and yet my voice must rise to thine ears;  
But alas! it comes too late!

Last night at mid-watch, by Aberdour,  
When the moon was dead in the skies,  
King, in a death-light of thine own  
I saw thy shape arise.

and in full season, as erst I said,  
The doom had gained its growth;  
and the shroud had risen above thy neck  
And covered thine eyes and mouth.

"And no moon woke, but the pale dawn  
broke,  
And still thy soul stood there;  
And I thought its silence cried to my  
soul  
As the first rays crowned its hair.

"Since then have I journeyed fast and  
fain  
In very despite of Fate,  
Lest Hope might still be found in God's  
will:  
But they drove me from thy gate.

"For every man on God's ground, O  
King,  
His death grows up from his birth  
In a shadow-plant perpetually;  
And thine towers high, a black yew-  
tree,  
O'er the Charterhouse of Perth!"

That room was built far out from the  
house;  
And none but we in the room  
Might hear the voice that rose beneath,  
Nor the tread of the coming doom.

For now there came a torchlight-glare,  
And a clang of arms there came;  
And not a soul in that space but thought  
Of the foe Sir Robert Græme.

Yea, from the country of the Wild Scots,  
O'er mountain, valley, and glen,  
He had brought with him in murderous  
league  
Three hundred armèd men.

The King knew all in an instant's flash,  
And like a King did he stand;  
But there was no armor in all the room,  
Nor weapon lay to his hand.

And all we women flew to the door  
And thought to have made it fast:  
But the bolts were gone and the bars  
were gone  
And the locks were riven and brast.

And he caught the pale queen in his  
arms  
As the iron footsteps fell, —  
Then loosed her, standing alone, and said,  
"Our bliss was our farewell!"



And 'twixt his lips he murmured a  
prayer,

And he crossed his brow and breast;  
And proudly in royal hardihood  
Even so with folded arms he stood, —  
The prize of the bloody quest.

Then on me leaped the Queen like a deer:  
"Catherine, help!" she cried.

And low at his feet we clasped his knees  
Together side by side.

"Oh! even a King, for his people's sake,  
From treasonous death must hide!"

"For *her* sake most!" I cried, and I  
marked

The pang that my words would wring.  
And the iron tongs from the chimney-nook  
I snatched and held to the King: —

"Wrench up the plank! and the vault  
beneath

Shall yield safe harboring."

With brows low-bent, from my eager hand  
The heavy heft did he take;

And the plank at his feet he wrenched  
and tore;

And as he frowned through the open floor,  
Again I said, "For *her* sake!"

Then he cried to the Queen, "God's will  
be done!"

For her hands were clasped in prayer,  
And down he sprang to the inner crypt;

And straight we closed the plank he had  
ripp'd

And toiled to smoothe it fair.

(Alas! in that vault a gap once was

Wherethro' the King might have fled;  
But three days since close-walled had it  
been

By his will; for the ball would roll therein  
When without at the palm he play'd.)

Then the queen cried, "Catherine, keep  
the door,

And I to this will suffice!"

At her word I rose all dazed to my feet,  
And my heart was fire and ice.

And louder ever the voices grew,

And the tramp of men in mail;  
Until to my brain it seemed to be  
As though I tossed on a ship at sea  
In the teeth of a crashing gale.

Then back I flew to the rest; and hard  
We strove with sinews knit

To force the table against the door;  
But we might not compass it.

Then my wild gaze sped far down the hall  
To the place of the hearthstone-sill;

And the Queen bent ever above the floor,  
For the plank was rising still.

And now the rush was heard on the stair

And "God, what help?" was our cry.  
And was I frenzied or was I bold?

I looked at each empty stanchion-hold,  
And no bar but my arm had I!

Like iron felt my arm, as through

The staple I made it pass: —

Alack! it was flesh and bone—no more  
'Twas Catherine Douglas sprang to the

door,

But I fell back Kate Barlass,

With that they all thronged into the hall

Half dim to my failing ken;

And the space that was but a void before  
Was a crowd of wrathful men.

Behind the door I had fall'n and lay,

Yet my sense was wildly aware,  
And for all the pain of my shattered arm  
I never fainted there.

Even as I fell, my eyes were cast

Where the King leaped down to the  
pit;

And lo! the plank was smooth in its  
place,

And the Queen stood far from it.

And under the litters and through the bed

And within the presses all

The traitors sought for the King, and  
pierced

The arras around the wall.

And through the chamber they ramped  
and stormed

Like lions loose in the lair,

And scarce could trust to their very  
eyes, —

For behold! no King was there.

Then one of them seized the Queen, and  
cried, —

"Now tell us, where is thy lord?"

And he held the sharp point over her heart:  
 And drooped not her eyes nor did she start,  
 But she answered never a word.

And the sword half pierced the true  
 true breast:  
 But it was the Græme's own son  
 said, "This is a woman, — we seek a  
 man!"  
 And away from her girdle-zone  
 struck the point of the murderous  
 steel;  
 And that foul deed was not done.

And forth flowed all the throng like a sea,  
 And 'twas empty space once more;  
 And my eyes sought out the wounded  
 Queen  
 As I lay behind the door.

And I said: "Dear Lady, leave me here,  
 For I cannot help you now;  
 Fly while you may, and none shall reck  
 Of my place here lying low."

And she said, "My Catherine, God help  
 thee!"  
 And then she looked to the distant floor,  
 Clasping her hands, "Oh God help  
 him,"  
 And he sobbed, "for we can no more!"

And God He knows what help may mean,  
 What it mean to live or to die;  
 And what sore sorrow and mighty moan  
 Earth it may cost ere yet a throne  
 Be filled in His house on high.

And now the ladies fled with the Queen;  
 And through the open door  
 The night-wind wailed round the empty  
 room  
 And the rushes shook on the floor.

And the bed drooped low in the dark re-  
 cess  
 Whence the arras was rent away;  
 And the firelight still shone over the space  
 Where our hidden secret lay.

And the rain had ceased, and the moon-  
 beams lit  
 The window high in the wall, —  
 And the beams that on the plank that I  
 knew

Through the painted pane did fall  
 And gleamed with the splendor of Scot-  
 land's crown  
 And shield armorial.

But then a great wind swept up the skies,  
 And the climbing moon fell back;  
 And the royal blazon fled from the floor,  
 And nought remained on its track;  
 And high in the darkened window-pane  
 The shield and the crown were black.

And what I say next I partly saw  
 And partly I heard in sooth,  
 And partly since from the murderers' lips  
 The torture wrung the truth.

For now again came the armed tread  
 And fast through the hall it fell;  
 But the throng was less; and ere I saw,  
 By the voice without I could tell  
 That Robert Stuart had come with them  
 Who knew that chamber well.

And over the space the Græme strode dark  
 With his mantle round him flung;  
 And in his eye was a flaming light  
 But not a word on his tongue.

And Stuart held a torch to the floor,  
 And he found the thing he sought;  
 And they slashed the plank away with  
 their swords;  
 And O God! I fainted not!

And the traitor held his torch in the gap,  
 All smoking and smouldering;  
 And through the vapor and fire, beneath  
 In the dark crypt's narrow ring,  
 With a shout that pealed to the room's  
 high roof  
 They saw their naked King.

Half naked he stood, but stood as one  
 Who yet could do and dare:  
 With the crown, the King was stript  
 away, —  
 The Knight was reft of his battle-array, —  
 But still the Man was there.

From the rout then stepped a villain  
 forth, —  
 Sir John Hall was his name;  
 With a knife unsheathed he leapt to the  
 vault  
 Beneath the torchlight-flame.

Of his person and stature was the King  
 A man right manly strong,  
 And mightily by the shoulder-blades  
 His foe to his feet he flung.

Then the traitor's brother, Sir Thomas  
 Hall,  
 Sprang down to work his worst;  
 And the King caught the second man  
 by the neck  
 And flung him above the first.

And he smote and trampled them under  
 him;  
 And a long month thence they bare  
 All black their throats with the grip of his  
 hands  
 When the hangman's hand came there.

And sore he strove to have had their  
 knives,  
 But the sharp blades gashed his hands.  
 Oh James! so armed, thou hadst battled  
 there  
 Till help had come of thy bands;  
 And oh! once more thou hadst held our  
 throne  
 And ruled thy Scottish lands!

But while the King o'er his foes still  
 raged  
 With a heart that nought could tame,  
 Another man sprang down to the crypt;  
 And with his sword in his hand hard-  
 gripp'd  
 There stood Sir Robert Græme.

(Now shame on the recreant traitor's  
 heart  
 Who durst not face his King  
 Till the body unarmed was wearied out  
 With two-fold combating!

Ah! well might the people sing and say,  
 As oft ye have heard aright:—  
*"O Robert Græme, O Robert Græme,  
 Who slew our King, God give thee shame!"*  
 For he slew him not as a knight.)

And the naked King turned round at  
 bay,  
 But his strength had passed the goal,  
 And he could but gasp:—"Mine hour is  
 come;  
 But oh! to succor thine own soul's doom,  
 Let a priest now shrive my soul!"

And the traitor looked on the King  
 spent strength,  
 And said:—"Have I kept my word?  
 Yea, King, the mortal pledge that I gave  
 No black friar's shrift thy soul shall save  
 But the shrift of this red sword!"

With that he smote his King through the  
 breast;  
 And all they three in that pen  
 Fell on him and stabbed and stabbed him  
 there  
 Like merciless murderous men.

Yet seemed it now that Sir Robert  
 Græme,  
 Ere the King's last breath was o'er,  
 Turned sick at heart with the deadly sight  
 And would have done no more.

But a cry came from the troop above:  
 "If him thou do not slay,  
 The price of his life that thou dost spare  
 Thy forfeit life shall pay!"

O God! what more did I hear or see,  
 Or how should I tell the rest?  
 But there at length our King lay slain  
 With sixteen wounds in his breast.

O God! and now did a bell boom forth,  
 And the murderers turned and fled;—  
 Too late, too late, O God, did it sound!—  
 And I heard the true men mustering round  
 And the cries and the coming tread.

But ere they came to the black death-gate,  
 Somewise did I creep and steal;  
 And lo! or ever I swooned away,  
 Through the dusk I saw where the white  
 face lay  
 In the Pit of Fortune's Wheel.

And now, ye Scottish maids who have  
 heard  
 Dread things of the days grown old,—  
 Even at the last, of true Queen Jane  
 May somewhat yet be told,  
 And how she dealt for her dear lord's sake  
 Dire vengeance manifold.

'Twas in the Charterhouse of Perth,  
 In the fair-lit Death-chapelle,  
 That the slain King's corpse on bier was  
 lain  
 With chant and requiem-knell.

And all with royal wealth of balm  
 Was the body purified :  
 And none could trace on the brow and lips  
 The death that he had died.

In his robes of state he lay asleep  
 With orb and sceptre in hand ;  
 And by the crown he wore on his throne  
 Was his kingly forehead spann'd.

And, girls, 'twas a sweet sad thing to see  
 How the curling golden hair,  
 As in the day of the poet's youth,  
 From the King's crown clustered there.

And if all had come to pass in the brain  
 That throbb'd beneath those curls,  
 Then Scots had said in the days to come  
 That this their soil was a different home  
 And a different Scotland, girls !

And the Queen sat by him night and day,  
 And oft she knelt in prayer,  
 All wan and pale in the widow's veil  
 That shrouded her shining hair.

And I had got good help of my hurt :  
 And only to me some sign  
 She made ; and save the priests that were  
 there  
 No face would she see but mine.

And the month of March wore on apace ;  
 And now fresh couriers fared  
 Still from the country of the Wild Scots  
 With news of the traitors snared.

And still as I told her day by day,  
 Her pallor changed to sight,  
 And the frost grew to a furnace-flame  
 That burnt her visage white.

And evermore as I brought her word,  
 She bent to her dead King James,  
 And in the cold ear with fire-drawn breath  
 She spoke the traitors' names.

But when the name of Sir Robert Græme  
 Was the one she had to give,  
 I ran to hold her up from the floor ;  
 For the froth was on her lips, and sore  
 I feared that she could not live.

And the month of March wore nigh to its  
 end,  
 And still was the death-pall spread ;  
 For she would not bury her slaughtered  
 lord  
 Till his slayers all were dead.

And now of their dooms dread tidings  
 came,  
 And of torments fierce and dire ;  
 And nought she spake, — she had ceased  
 to speak, —  
 But her eyes were a soul on fire.

But when I told her the bitter end  
 Of the stern and just award,  
 She leaned o'er the bier, and thrice three  
 times  
 She kissed the lips of her lord.

And then she said, — " My King, they are  
 dead !"  
 And she knelt on the chapel-floor,  
 And whispered low with a strange proud  
 smile, —  
 " James, James, they suffered more !"

Last she stood up to her queenly height  
 But she shook like an autumn leaf,  
 As though the fire wherein she burned  
 Then left her body, and all were turned  
 To winter of life-long grief.

And " O James !" she said, — " My  
 James !" she said, —  
 " Alas for the woful thing,  
 That a poet true and a friend of man,  
 In desperate days of bale and ban,  
 Should needs be born a King !"

# CHRISTINA ROSSETTI

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# CHRISTINA ROSSETTI

## ELEANOR

CHERRY-RED her mouth was,  
Morning-blue her eye,  
Lady-slim her little waist  
Rounded prettily;  
And her sweet smile of gladness  
Made every heart rejoice:  
But sweeter even than her smile  
The tones were of her voice.

Sometimes she spoke, sometimes she sang;  
And evermore the sound  
Floated, a dreamy melody,  
Upon the air around;  
As though a wind were singing  
Far up beside the sun,  
Till sound and warmth and glory  
Were blended all in one.

Her hair was long and golden,  
And clustered unconfined  
Over a forehead high and white  
That spoke a noble mind.  
Her little hand, her little foot,  
Were ready evermore  
To hurry forth to meet a friend;  
She smiling at the door.

But if she sang or if she spoke,  
'Twas music soft and grand,  
As though a distant singing sea  
Broke on a tuneful strand;  
As though a blessed Angel  
Were singing a glad song,  
Halfway between the earth and heaven  
Joyfully borne along.

1847.

## HEART'S CHILL BETWEEN

I did not chide him, though I knew  
That he was false to me.  
Chide the exhaling of the dew,  
The ebbing of the sea,  
The fading of a rosy hue —  
But not inconstancy.

Why strive for love when love is o'er —  
Why bind a restive heart?  
He never knew the pain I bore  
In saying — "We must part,  
Let us be friends and nothing more";  
O woman's shallow art!

But it is over, it is done;  
I hardly heed it now:  
So many weary years have run  
Since then I think not how  
Things might have been — but greet  
each one  
With an unruffled brow.

What time I am where others be  
My heart seems very calm —  
Stone-calm: but, if all go from me,  
There comes a vague alarm,  
A shrinking in the memory  
From some forgotten harm.

And often through the long long night,  
Waking when none are near,  
I feel my heart beat fast with fright,  
Yet know not what I fear:  
Oh how I long to see the light,  
And the sweet birds to hear!

To have the sun upon my face,  
To look up through the trees,  
To walk forth in the open space  
And listen to the breeze, —  
And not to dream the burial-place  
Is clogging my weak knees.

Sometimes I can nor weep nor pray,  
But am half stupefied;  
And then all those who see me say  
Mine eyes are opened wide  
And that my wits seem gone astray; —  
Ah would that I had died!

Would I could die and be at peace —  
Or living could forget!  
My grief nor grows nor doth decrease,  
But ever is. And yet  
Methinks now that all this shall cease  
Before the sun shall set. 1847.

## SONG

WHEN I am dead, my dearest,  
Sing no sad songs for me;  
Plant thou no roses at my head,  
Nor shady cypress tree:  
Be the green grass above me  
With showers and dewdrops wet;  
And if thou wilt, remember,  
And if thou wilt, forget.

I shall not see the shadows,  
I shall not feel the rain;  
I shall not hear the nightingale  
Sing on as if in pain:  
And dreaming through the twilight  
That doth not rise nor set,  
Haply I may remember,  
And haply may forget.

1848.

## SONG

OH roses for the flush of youth,  
And laurel for the perfect prime;  
But pluck an ivy branch for me  
Grown old before my time.

Oh violets for the grave of youth,  
And bay for those dead in their prime;  
Give me the withered leaves I chose  
Before in the old time.

1849.

## REMEMBER

REMEMBER me when I am gone away,  
Gone far away into the silent land;  
When you can no more hold me by the  
hand,  
Nor I half turn to go yet turning stay.  
Remember me when no more day by day  
You tell me of our future that you  
plann'd:  
Only remember me; you understand  
It will be late to counsel then or pray.  
Yet if you should forget me for a while  
And afterwards remember, do not  
grieve:  
For if the darkness and corruption  
leave  
A vestige of the thoughts that once I  
had,  
Better by far you should forget and smile  
Than that you should remember and  
be sad.

1849.

## SOUND SLEEP

SOME are laughing, some are weeping;  
She is sleeping, only sleeping.  
Round her rest wild flowers are creeping;  
There the wind is heaping, heaping  
Sweetest sweets of Summer's keeping,  
By the corn-fields ripe for reaping.

There are lilies, and there blushes  
The deep rose, and there the thrushes  
Sing till latest sunlight flushes  
In the west; a fresh wind brushes  
Through the leaves while evening hushes.

There by day the lark is singing  
And the grass and weeds are springing;  
There by night the bat is winging;  
There for ever winds are bringing  
Far-off chimes of church-bells ringing.

Night and morning, noon and even,  
Their sound fills her dreams with Heaven:  
The long strife at length is striven:  
Till her grave-bands shall be riven,  
Such is the good portion given  
To her soul at rest and shriven.

1849.

## QUEEN ROSE

THE jessamine shows like a star;  
The lilies sway like sceptres slim;  
Fair clematis from near and far  
Sets forth its wayward tangled whim;  
Curved meadowsweet blooms rich and  
dim;—  
But yet a rose is fairer far.

The jessamine is odorous; so  
Maid-lilies are, and clematis;  
And where tall meadowsweet-flowers  
grow  
A rare and subtle perfume is;—  
What can there be more choice than  
these?—  
A rose when it doth bud and blow.

Let others choose sweet jessamine,  
Or weave their lily-crown aright,  
And let who love it pluck and twine  
Loose clematis, or draw delight  
From meadowsweets' cluster downy  
white—  
The rose, the perfect rose, be mine.

1849.

## A SUMMER WISH

LIVE all thy sweet life through,  
 Sweet Rose, dew-sprout,  
 Drop down thine evening dew  
 To gather it anew  
 When day is bright :  
 I fancy thou wast meant  
 Chiefly to give delight.

Sing in the silent sky,  
 Glad soaring bird ;  
 Sing out thy notes on high  
 To sunbeam straying by  
 Or passing cloud ;  
 Heedless if thou art heard,  
 Sing thy full song aloud.

Oh that it were with me  
 As with the flower !  
 Blooming on its own tree  
 For butterfly and bee  
 That I might bloom mine hour,  
 A rose in spite of thorns.

O that my work were done  
 As birds' that soar  
 Rejoicing in the sun :  
 That when my time is run  
 And daylight too,  
 I so might rest once more  
 Cool with refreshing dew.

1851.

## HOLY INNOCENTS

SLEEP, little Baby, sleep ;  
 The holy Angels love thee,  
 And guard thy bed, and keep  
 A blessed watch above thee.  
 No spirit can come near  
 Nor evil beast to harm thee :  
 Sleep, Sweet, devoid of fear  
 Where nothing need alarm thee.

The Love which doth not sleep,  
 The eternal Arms surround thee :  
 The Shepherd of the sheep  
 In perfect love hath found thee.  
 Sleep through the holy night,  
 Christ-kept from snare and sorrow,  
 Until thou wake to light  
 And love and warmth to-morrow.

1853.

## A WISH

I WISH I were a little bird  
 That out of sight doth soar ;  
 I wish I were a song once heard  
 But often pondered o'er,  
 Or shadow of a lily stirred  
 By wind upon the floor,  
 Or echo of a loving word  
 Worth all that went before,  
 Or memory of a hope deferred  
 That springs again no more.

1853.

## A SOUL

SHE stands as pale as Parian statues  
 stand ;  
 Like Cleopatra when she turned at bay,  
 And felt her strength above the Roman  
 sway,  
 And felt the aspic writhing in her hand.  
 Her face is steadfast toward the shadowy  
 land,  
 For dim beyond it looms the land of  
 day :  
 Her feet are steadfast, all the arduous  
 way  
 That foot-track doth not waver on the  
 sand.  
 She stands there like a beacon through  
 the night,  
 A pale clear beacon where the storm-  
 drift is —  
 She stands alone, a wonder deathly-white :  
 She stands there patient nerved with inner  
 might,  
 Indomitable in her feebleness,  
 Her face and will athirst against the  
 light.

1854.

## THE FIRST SPRING DAY

I WONDER if the sap is stirring yet,  
 If wintry birds are dreaming of a mate,  
 If frozen snowdrops feel as yet the sun  
 And crocus fires are kindling one by one :  
 Sing, robin, sing ;  
 I still am sore in doubt concerning Spring.

I wonder if the Springtide of this year  
 Will bring another Spring both lost and  
 dear ;  
 If heart and spirit will find out their  
 Spring,



You look and long: while oftentimes  
Precursive flush of morning climbs,  
And air vibrates with coming chimes.  
1858.

## SPRING

FROST-LOCKED all the winter,  
Seeds, and roots, and stones of fruits,  
What shall make their sap ascend  
That they may put forth shoots?  
Tips of tender green,  
Leaf, or blade, or sheath;  
Telling of the hidden life  
That breaks forth underneath,  
Life nursed in its grave by Death.

Blows the thaw-wind pleasantly,  
Drips the soaking rain,  
By fits looks down the waking sun:  
Young grass springs on the plain;  
Young leaves clothe early hedgerow  
trees;  
Seeds, and roots, and stones of fruits,  
Sworn with sap put forth their shoots;  
Curled-headed ferns sprout in the lane;  
Birds sing and pair again.

There is no time like Spring,  
When life's alive in everything,  
Before new nestlings sing,  
Before cleft swallows speed their journey  
back

Along the trackless track —  
God guides their wing,  
He spreads their table that they nothing  
lack, —  
Before the daisy grows a common flower,  
Before the sun has power  
To scorch the world up in his noontide  
hour.

There is no time like Spring,  
Like Spring that passes by;  
There is no life like Spring-life born to  
die, —

Piercing the sod,  
Clothing the uncouth clod,  
Hatched in the nest,  
Fledged on the windy bough,  
Strong on the wing:  
There is no time like Spring that passes  
by,  
Now newly born, and now  
Hastening to die.

1859.

## SUMMER

WINTER is cold-hearted,  
Spring is yea and nay,  
Autumn is a weathercock  
Blown every way.  
Summer days for me  
When every leaf is on its tree;

When Robin's not a beggar,  
And Jenny Wren's a bride,  
And larks hang singing, singing, singing,  
Over the wheat-fields wide,  
And anchored lilies ride,  
And the pendulum spider  
Swings from side to side;

And blue-black beetles transact business,  
And gnats fly in a host,  
And furry caterpillars hasten  
That no time be lost,  
And moths grow fat and thrive,  
And ladybirds arrive.

Before green apples blush,  
Before green nuts embrown,  
Why one day in the country  
Is worth a month in town;  
Is worth a day and a year  
Of the dusty, musty, lag-last fashion  
That days drone elsewhere.

1864.

## BIRD OR BEAST?

DID any bird come flying  
After Adam and Eve,  
When the door was shut against them  
And they sat down to grieve?

I think not Eve's peacock  
Splendid to see,  
And I think not Adam's eagle;  
But a dove may be.

Did any beast come pushing  
Through the thorny hedge  
Into the thorny thistly world,  
Out from Eden's edge?

I think not a lion,  
Though his strength is such;  
But an innocent loving lamb  
May have done as much.



If the dove preached from her bough,  
 And the lamb from his sod,  
 The lamb and the dove  
 Were preachers sent from God.

1864.

## A DAUGHTER OF EVE

A FOOL I was to sleep at noon,  
 And wake when night is chilly  
 Beneath the comfortless cold moon;  
 A fool to pluck my rose too soon,  
 A fool to snap my lily.

My garden-plot I have not kept;  
 Faded and all-forsaken,  
 I weep as I have never wept:  
 Oh it was summer when I slept,  
 It's winter now I waken.

Talk what you please of future Spring  
 And sun-warmed sweet tomorrow:—  
 Stripped bare of hope and everything,  
 No more to laugh, no more to sing,  
 I sit alone with sorrow.

1865.

WHO has seen the wind?  
 Neither I nor you:  
 But when the leaves hang trembling  
 The wind is passing thro'.

Who has seen the wind?  
 Neither you nor I:  
 But when the trees bow down their heads  
 The wind is passing by.

1872.

THE lily has a smooth stalk,  
 Will never hurt your hand;  
 But the rose upon her briar  
 Is lady of the land.

There's sweetness in an apple tree,  
 And profit in the corn;  
 But lady of all beauty  
 Is a rose upon a thorn.

When with moss and honey  
 She tips her bending briar,  
 And half unfolds her glowing heart,  
 She sets the world on fire.

1872.

## COR MIO

STILL sometimes in my secret heart of  
 hearts

I say "Cor mio" when I remember you,  
 And thus I yield us both one tender  
 due,

Welding one whole of two divided parts.  
 Ah Friend, too wise or unwise for such  
 arts,

Ah noble Friend, silent and strong and  
 true,

Would you have given me roses for the  
 rue

For which I bartered roses in love's  
 marts?

So late in autumn one forgets the spring,  
 Forgets the summer with its opulence,  
 The callow birds that long have found a  
 wing,

The swallows that more lately got them  
 hence:

Will anything like spring, will anything  
 Like summer, rouse one day the slum-  
 bering sense?

About 1875.

## CONFLUENTS

As rivers seek the sea,  
 Much more deep than they,  
 So my soul seeks thee  
 Far away;  
 As running rivers moan  
 On their course alone,  
 So I moan  
 Left alone.

As the delicate rose  
 To the sun's sweet strength  
 Doth herself unclose,  
 Breadth and length;  
 So spreads my heart to thee  
 Unveiled utterly,  
 I to thee  
 Utterly.

As morning dew exhales  
 Sunwards pure and free  
 So my spirit fails  
 After thee.  
 As dew leaves not a trace  
 On the green earth's face;  
 I, no trace  
 On thy face.

Its goal the river knows,  
 Dewdrops find a way,  
 Sunlight cheers the rose  
 In her day :  
 Shall I, lone sorrow past,  
 Find thee at the last ?  
 Sorrow past,  
 Thee at last ?

*Before 1876.*

# DE PROFUNDIS

Oh why is heaven built so far,  
 Oh why is earth set so remote ?  
 I cannot reach the nearest star  
 That hangs afloat.

I would not care to reach the moon,  
 One round monotonous of change ;  
 Yet even she repeats her tune  
 Beyond my range.

I never watch the scattered fire  
 Of stars, or sun's far-trailing train,  
 But all my heart is one desire,  
 And all in vain :

For I am bound with fleshly bands,  
 Joy, beauty, lie beyond my scope ;  
 I strain my heart, I stretch my hands,  
 And catch at hope.

*Before 1882.*

# MORRIS

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## MORRIS

### WINTER WEATHER,

We rode together  
In the winter weather  
To the broad mead under the hill;  
Though the skies did shiver  
With the cold, the river  
Ran, and was never still.

No cloud did darken  
The night; we did harken  
The hound's bark far away.  
It was solemn midnight  
In that dread, dread night,  
In the years that have pass'd for aye.

Two rode beside me,  
My banner did hide me,  
As it drooped adown from my lance;  
With its deep blue trapping,  
The mail over-lapping,  
My gallant horse did prance.

So ever together  
In the sparkling weather  
Moved my banner and lance;  
And its laurel trapping,  
The steel over-lapping,  
The stars saw quiver and dance.

We met together  
In the winter weather  
By the town-walls under the hill;  
His mail rings came clinking,  
They broke on my thinking,  
For the night was hush'd and still.

Two rode beside him,  
His banner did hide him,  
As it drooped down straight from his  
lance;  
With its blood-red trapping,  
The mail over-lapping,  
His mighty horse did prance.

And ever together  
In the solemn weather  
Moved his banner and lance;  
And the holly trapping,  
The steel over-lapping,  
Did shimmer and shiver, and dance.

Back reined the squires  
Till they saw the spires  
Over the city wall;  
Ten fathoms between us,  
No dames could have seen us  
Tilt from the city wall.

There we sat upright  
Till the full midnight  
Should be told from the city's chimes;  
Sharp from the towers  
Leaped forth the showers  
Of the many clanging rhymes.

'Twas the midnight hour,  
Deep from the tower  
Boom'd the following bell;  
Down go our lances,  
Shout for the lances!  
The last toll was his knell.

There he lay, dying;  
He had, for his lying,  
A spear in his traitorous mouth;  
A false tale made he  
Of my true, true lady;  
But the spear went through his mouth.

In the winter weather  
We rode back together  
From the broad mead under the hill;  
And the cock sung his warning  
As it grew toward morning,  
But the far-off hound was still.

Black grew his tower  
As we rode down lower,



Black from the barren hill;  
And our horses strode  
Up the winding road  
To the gateway dim and still.

At the gate of his tower,  
In the quiet hour,

We laid his body there;  
But his helmet broken,  
We took as a token;  
Shout for my lady fair!

We rode back together  
In the wintry weather  
From the broad mead under the hill;  
No cloud did darken  
The night; we did harken  
How the hound bay'd from the hill.  
January, 1856.<sup>1</sup>

### RIDING TOGETHER

FOR many, many days together  
The wind blew steady from the East;  
For many days hot grew the weather,  
About the time of our Lady's Feast.

For many days we rode together,  
Yet met we neither friend nor foe;  
Hotter and clearer grew the weather,  
Steadily did the East wind blow.

We saw the trees in the hot, bright  
weather,  
Clear-cut, with shadows very black,  
As freely we rode on together  
With helms unlaced and bridles slack.

And often as we rode together,  
We, looking down the green-bank'd  
stream,  
Saw flowers in the sunny weather,  
And saw the bubble-making bream.

And in the night lay down together,  
And hung above our heads the rood,  
Or watch'd night-long in the dewy  
weather,  
The while the moon did watch the  
wood.

Our spears stood bright and thick to-  
gether,  
Straight out the banners stream'd  
behind,

As we gallop'd on in the sunny weather,  
With faces turn'd towards the wind.

Down sank our threescore spears to-  
gether,  
As thick we saw the pagans ride;  
His eager face in the clear fresh weather,  
Shone out that last time by my side.

Up the sweep of the bridge we dash'd  
together,  
It rock'd to the crash of the meeting  
spears,  
Down rain'd the buds of the dear spring  
weather,  
The elm-tree flowers fell like tears.

There, as we roll'd and writhed together,  
I threw my arms above my head,  
For close by my side, in the lovely  
weather,  
I saw him reel and fall back dead.

I and the slayer met together,  
He waited the death-stroke there in his  
place,  
With thoughts of death, in the lovely  
weather,  
Gapingly mazed at my madden'd face.

Madly I fought as we fought together;  
In vain: the little Christian band  
The pagans drown'd, as in stormy  
weather,  
The river drowns low-lying land.

They bound my blood-stain'd hands to-  
gether,  
They bound his corpse to nod by my  
side:  
Then on we rode, in the bright March  
weather,  
With clash of cymbals did we ride.

We ride no more, no more together;  
My prison-bars are thick and strong,  
I take no heed of any weather,  
The sweet Saints grant I live not  
long.

May, 1856.

<sup>1</sup> The dates for Morris's poems have been compiled with the help of Mr. Temple Scott's excellent *Bibliography of the Works of William Morris*, and Mr. Forman's *The Books of William Morris*.

## THE CHAPEL IN LYONESS

SIR OZANA LE CURE HARDY. SIR GALAHAD.  
SIR BORS DE GANYS

*Sir Ozana.* All day long and every day,  
From Christmas-Eve to Whit-Sunday,  
Within that Chapel-aisle I lay,  
And no man came a-near.

Naked to the waist was I,  
And deep within my breast did lie,  
Though no man any blood could spy,  
The truncheon of a spear.

No meat did ever pass my lips  
Those days. Alas! the sunlight slips  
From off the gilded parclose, dips,  
And night comes on apace.

My arms lay back behind my head;  
Over my raised-up knees was spread  
A samite cloth of white and red;  
A rose lay on my face.

Many a time I tried to shout;  
But as in dream of battle-rout,  
My frozen speech would not well out;  
I could not even weep.

With inward sigh I see the sun  
Fade off the pillars one by one,  
My heart faints when the day is done,  
Because I cannot sleep.

Sometimes strange thoughts pass through  
my head;  
Not like a tomb is this my bed,  
Yet oft I think that I am dead;  
That round my tomb is writ,

"Ozana of the hardy heart,  
Knight of the Table Round,  
Pray for his soul, lords, of your part;  
A true knight he was found."

Ah! me, I cannot fathom it. [*He sleeps.*]

*Sir Galahad.* All day long and every day,  
Till his madness pass'd away,  
I watch'd Ozana as he lay  
Within the gilded screen.

All my singing moved him not;  
As I sung my heart grew hot,  
With the thought of Launcelot  
Far away, I ween.

So I went a little space  
From out the chapel, bathed my face  
In the stream that runs apace  
By the churchyard wall.

There I pluck'd a faint wild rose,  
Hard by where the linden grows,  
Sighing over silver rows  
Of the lilies tall.

I laid the flower across his mouth;  
The sparkling drops seem'd good for  
drouth;  
He smiled, turn'd round towards the  
south,  
Held up a golden tress.

The light smote on it from the west;  
He drew the covering from his breast,  
Against his heart that hair he pressed;  
Death him soon will bless.

*Sir Bors.* I enter'd by the western door;  
I saw a knight's helm lying there;  
I raised my eyes from off the floor,  
And caught the gleaming of his hair.

I stept full softly up to him;  
I laid my chin upon his head;  
I felt him smile; my eyes did swim,  
I was so glad he was not dead.

I heard Ozana murmur low.  
"There comes no sleep nor any love."  
But Galahad stoop'd and kiss'd his brow:  
He shiver'd; I saw his pale lips move.

*Sir Ozana.* There comes no sleep nor  
any love;  
Ah me! I shiver with delight.  
I am so weak I cannot move;  
God move me to thee, dear, to-night!  
Christ help! I have but little wit:  
My life went wrong; I see it writ,

"Ozana of the hardy heart,  
Knight of the Table Round,  
Pray for his soul, lords, on your part;  
A good knight he was found."

Now I begin to fathom it. [*He dies.*]

*Sir Bors.* Galahad sits dreamily:  
What strange things may his eyes see,  
Great blue eyes fix'd full on me?  
On his soul, Lord, have mercy.

*Sir Galahad.* Ozana, shall I pray for thee?

Her cheek is laid to thine;  
No long time hence, also I see  
Thy wasted fingers twine

Within the tresses of her hair  
That shineth gloriously,  
Thinly outspread in the clear air  
Against the jasper sea.

September, 1856.

### SUMMER DAWN

PRAY but one prayer for me 'twixt thy  
closed lips;

Think but one thought of me up in the  
stars.

The summer night waneth, the morning  
light slips,

Faint and gray 'twixt the leaves of the  
aspen, betwixt the cloud-bars,

That are patiently waiting there for the  
dawn:

Patient and colorless, though Heaven's  
gold

Waits to float through them along with  
the sun.

Far out in the meadows, above the young  
corn,

The heavy elms wait, and restless and  
cold

The uneasy wind rises; the roses are dun;  
They pray the long gloom through for  
daylight new born,

Round the lone house in the midst of the  
corn.

Speak but one word to me over the  
corn,

Over the tender, bow'd locks of the  
corn. October, 1856.

### HANDS

'TWIXT the sunlight and the shade  
Float up memories of my maid:  
God, remember Guendolen!

Gold or gems she did not wear,  
But her yellow rippled hair,  
Like a veil, hid Guendolen.

'Twixt the sunlight and the shade,  
My rough hands so strangely made,  
Folded Golden Guendolen.

Hands used to grip the sword-hilt hard,  
Framed her face, while on the sward  
Tears fell down from Guendolen.

Guendolen now speaks no word,  
Hands fold round about the sword:  
Now no more of Guendolen.

Only 'twixt the light and shade  
Floating memories of my maid  
Make me pray for Guendolen.  
1856.

### GOLD HAIR

Is it not true that every day  
She climbeth up the same strange way,  
Her scarlet cloak spread broad and gay,  
Over my golden hair?

When I undo the knotted mass,  
Fathoms below the shadows pass  
Over my hair along the grass.  
O my golden hair!

See on the marble parapet,  
I lean my brow, strive to forget  
That fathoms below my hair grows wet  
With the dew, my golden hair.

See on the marble parapet,  
The faint red stains with tears are wet;  
The long years pass, no help comes yet  
To free my golden hair.

And yet: but I am growing old,  
For want of love my heart is cold;  
Years pass, the while I loose and fold  
The fathoms of my hair.

1858.<sup>1</sup>

### THE DEFENCE OF GUENEVERE

BUT, knowing now that they would have  
her speak,  
She threw her wet hair backward from her  
brow,  
Her hand close to her mouth touching her  
cheek,

<sup>1</sup> The preceding poem, *Hands*, published under that title in the Oxford and Cambridge Magazine, 1856, and the lyric stanzas to which I have here given the title *Gold Hair*, both form part of *Rapunzel* in the *Guenevere* volume, 1858. (*Morris' note.*)

As though she had had there a shameful  
 blow,  
 And feeling it shameful to feel aught but  
 shame  
 All through her heart, yet felt her cheek  
 burned so,

She must a little touch it; like one lame  
 She walked away from Gauwaine, with  
 her head  
 Still lifted up; and on her cheek of flame

The tears dried quick; she stopped at last  
 and said:  
 "O knights and lords, it seems but little  
 skill  
 To talk of well-known things past now  
 and dead.

"God wot I ought to say, I have done ill,  
 And pray you all forgiveness heartily!  
 Because you must be right, such great  
 lords; still

"Listen, suppose your time were come to  
 die,  
 And you were quite alone and very weak -  
 Yea, laid a dying while very mightily

"The wind was ruffling up the narrow  
 streak  
 Of river through your broad lands running  
 well:  
 Suppose a hush should come, then some  
 one speak:

"One of these cloths is heaven, and one  
 is hell,  
 Now choose one cloth for ever; which  
 they be,  
 I will not tell you, you must somehow  
 tell

"Of your own strength and mightiness;  
 here, see!"  
 Yea, yea, my lord, and you to ope your  
 eyes,  
 At foot of your familiar bed to see

"A great God's angel standing, with such  
 dyes,  
 Not known on earth, on his great wings,  
 and hands,  
 Held out two ways, light from the inner  
 skies

"Showing him well, and making his  
 commands  
 Seem to be God's commands, moreover,  
 too,  
 Holding within his hands the cloths on  
 wands;

"And one of these strange choosing cloths  
 was blue,  
 Wavy and long, and one cut short and  
 red;  
 No man could tell the better of the two.

"After a shivering half-hour you said:  
 'God help! heaven's color, the blue;'  
 and he said, 'hell.'  
 Perhaps you would then roll upon your  
 bed,

"And cry to all good men that loved you  
 well,  
 'Ah Christ! if only I had known, known,  
 known;'  
 Launcelot went away, then I could tell,

"Like wisest man how all things would be,  
 moan,  
 And roll and hurt myself, and long to  
 die,  
 And yet fear much to die for what was  
 sown.

"Nevertheless you, O Sir Gauwaine, lie,  
 Whatever may have happened through  
 these years,  
 God knows I speak truth, saying that  
 you lie."

Her voice was low at first, being full of  
 tears,  
 But as it cleared, it grew full loud and  
 shrill,  
 Growing a windy shriek in all men's ears,

A ringing in their startled brains, until  
 She said that Gauwaine lied, then her  
 voice sunk,  
 And her great eyes began again to fill,

Though still she stood right up, and never  
 shrunk,  
 But spoke on bravely, glorious lady  
 fair!  
 Whatever tears her full lips may have  
 drunk,

She stood, and seemed to think, and  
 wrung her hair,  
 Spoke out at last with no more trace of  
 shame,  
 With passionate twisting of her body  
 there :

"It chanced upon a day that Launcelot  
 came  
 To dwell at Arthur's court : at Christmas-  
 time  
 This happened ; when the heralds sung  
 his name,

"Son of King Ban of Benwick seemed  
 to chime  
 Along with all the bells that rang that day,  
 O'er the white roofs, with little change of  
 rhyme.

"Christmas and whitened winter passed  
 away,  
 And over me the April sunshine came,  
 Made very awful with black hail-clouds,  
 yea

"And in the Summer I grew white with  
 flame,  
 And bowed my head down : Autumn, and  
 the sick  
 Sure knowledge things would never be the  
 same,

"However often Spring might be most  
 thick  
 Of blossoms and buds, smote on me, and  
 I grew  
 Careless of most things, let the clock  
 tick, tick,

"To my unhappy pulse, that beat right  
 through  
 My eager body ; while I laughed out loud,  
 And let my lips curl up at false or true,

"Seemed cold and shallow without any  
 cloud.  
 Behold, my judges, then the cloths were  
 brought ;  
 While I was dizzied thus, old thoughts  
 would crowd,

"Belonging to the time ere I was bought  
 By Arthur's great name and his little  
 love ;  
 Must I give up for ever then, I thought,

"That which I deemed would ever round  
 me move  
 Glorifying all things ; for a little word,  
 Scarce ever meant at all, must I now  
 prove

"Stone-cold for ever ? Pray you, does  
 the Lord  
 Will that all folks should be quite happy  
 and good ?  
 I love God now a little, if this cord

"Were broken, once for all what striving  
 could  
 Make me love anything in earth or  
 heaven ?  
 So day by day it grew, as if one should

"Slip slowly down some path worn  
 smooth and even,  
 Down to a cool sea on a summer day ;  
 Yet still in slipping there was some small  
 leaven

"Of stretched hands catching small  
 stones by the way,  
 Until one surely reached the sea at  
 last,  
 And felt strange new joy as the worn  
 head lay

"Back, with the hair like sea-weed, yea  
 all past  
 Sweat of the forehead, dryness of the lips,  
 Washed utterly out by the dear waves  
 o'ercast,

"In the lone sea, far off from any ships !  
 Do I not know now of a day in Spring ?  
 No minute of that wild day ever slips

"From out my memory ; I hear thrushes  
 sing,  
 And wheresoever I may be, straightway  
 Thoughts of it all come up with most  
 fresh sting :

"I was half mad with beauty on that day,  
 And went without my ladies all alone.  
 In a quiet garden walled round every  
 way ;

"I was right joyful of that wall of stone,  
 That shut the flowers and trees up with  
 the sky,  
 And trebled all the beauty : to the bone,



"Yea right through to my heart, grown  
 very shy  
 With wary thoughts, it pierced, and made  
 me glad;  
 Exceedingly glad, and I knew verily,

"A little thing just then had made me  
 mad;  
 I dared not think, as I was wont to do,  
 Sometimes, upon my beauty; if I had

"Held out my long hand up against the  
 blue,  
 And, looking on the tenderly darken'd  
 fingers,  
 Thought that by rights one ought to see  
 quite through,

"There, see you, where the soft still light  
 yet lingers,  
 Round by the edges; what should I have  
 done,  
 If this had joined with yellow spotted  
 singers,

"And startling green drawn upward by  
 the sun?  
 But shouting, loosed out, see now! all  
 my hair,  
 And trancedly stood watching the west  
 wind run

"With faintest half-heard breathing  
 sound: why there  
 I lose my head e'en now in doing this;  
 But shortly listen: in that garden fair

"Came Launcelot walking; this is true,  
 the kiss  
 Wherewith we kissed in meeting that  
 spring day,  
 I scarce dare talk of the remember'd bliss

"When both our mouths went wandering  
 in one way,  
 And aching sorely, met among the leaves;  
 Our hands being left behind strained far  
 away.

"Never within a yard of my bright  
 sleeves  
 Had Launcelot come before: and now so  
 nigh!  
 After that day why is it Guenevere  
 grieves?

"Nevertheless you, O Sir Gauwaine, lie,  
 Whatever happened on through all those  
 years,  
 God knows I speak truth, saying that  
 you lie.

"Being such a lady could I weep these  
 tears  
 If this were true? A great queen such as I  
 Having sinn'd this way, straight her  
 conscience sears;

"And afterwards she liveth hatefully,  
 Slaying and poisoning, certes never  
 weeps:  
 Gauwaine, be friends now, speak me  
 lovingly.

"Do I not see how God's dear pity  
 creeps  
 All through your frame, and trembles in  
 your mouth?  
 Remember in what grave your mother  
 sleeps,

"Buried in some place far down in the  
 south  
 Men are forgetting as I speak to you;  
 By her head sever'd in that awful drouth

"Of pity that drew Agravine's fell blow,  
 I pray your pity! let me not scream out  
 Forever after, when the shrill winds blow

"Through half your castle-locks! let me  
 not shout  
 For ever after in the winter night  
 When you ride out alone! in battle-rout

"Let not my rusting tears make your  
 sword light!  
 Ah! God of mercy, how he turns away!  
 So, ever must I dress me to the fight,

"So: let God's justice work! Gauwaine,  
 I say,  
 See me hew down your proofs: yea, all  
 men know  
 Even as you said how Mellyagraunce one  
 day,

"One bitter day in *la Fausse Garde*, for so  
 All good knights held it after, saw:  
 Yea, sirs, by cursed unknightly outrage:  
 though

"You, Gauwaine, held his word without  
a flaw.

. . . . .

Not so, fair lords, even if the world should  
end

"This very day, and you were judges here  
Instead of God. Did you see Melly-  
graunce  
When Launcelot stood by him? what  
white fear

"Curdled his blood, and how his teeth did  
dance,  
His side sink in? as my knight cried and  
said:

'Slayer of unarm'd men, here is a chance!

"Setter of traps, I pray you guard your  
head,  
By God I am so glad to fight with you,  
Stripper of ladies, that my hand feels  
lead

"For driving weight; hurrah now! draw  
and do,  
For all my wounds are moving in my  
breast,  
And I am getting mad with waiting so.'

"He struck his hands together o'er the  
beast,  
Who fell down flat, and grovell'd at his  
feet,  
And groan'd at being slain so young:  
'At least,'

"My knight said, 'Rise you, sir, who are  
so fleet  
At catching ladies, half-arm'd will I  
fight,  
My left side all uncovered!' then I weet,

"Up sprang Sir Mellyagraunce with great  
delight  
Upon his knave's face; not until just  
then  
Did I quite hate him, as I saw my knight

"Along the lists look to my stake and  
pen  
With such a joyous smile, it made me  
sigh  
From agony beneath my waist-chain,  
when

"The fight began, and to me they drew  
nigh;  
Ever Sir Launcelot kept him on the right,  
And traversed warily, and ever high

"And fast leapt caitiff's sword, until my  
knight  
Sudden threw up his sword to his left  
hand,  
Caught it and swung it; that was all the  
fight;

"Except a spout of blood on the hot land;  
For it was hottest summer; and I know  
I wonder'd how the fire, while I should  
stand,

"And burn, against the heat, would  
quiver so,  
Yards above my head; thus these matters  
went;  
Which things were only warning of the woe

"That fell on me. Yet Mellyagraunce  
was shent,  
For Mellyagraunce had fought against  
the Lord;  
Therefore, my lords, take heed lest you  
be blent

"With all his wickedness; say no rash  
word  
Against me, being so beautiful; my eyes  
Wept all away to gray, may bring some  
sword

"To drown you in your blood; see my  
breast rise,  
Like waves of purple sea, as here I stand;  
And how my arms are moved in wonderful  
wise,

"Yea also at my full heart's strong com-  
mand,  
See through my long throat how the words  
go up  
In ripples to my mouth; how in my hand

"The shadow lies like wine within a cup  
Of marvellously color'd gold; yea now  
This little wind is rising, look you up,

"And wonder how the light is falling so  
Within my moving tresses: will you dare  
When you have looked a little on my  
brow,

"To say this thing is vile? or will you  
care  
For any plausible lies of cunning woof,  
When you can see my face with no lie  
there

"For ever? am I not a gracious proof? —  
'But in your chamber Launcelot was  
found' —  
Is there a good knight then would stand  
aloof,

"When a queen says with gentle queenly  
sound:  
'O true as steel, come out and talk with  
me,  
I love to see your step upon the ground

"Unwavering, also well I love to see  
That gracious smile light up your face,  
and hear  
Your wonderful words, that all mean  
verily

"The thing they seem to mean: good  
friend, so dear  
To me in everything, come here to-  
night,  
Or else the hours will pass most dull and  
drear;

"If you come not, I fear this time I  
might  
Get thinking over much of times gone by,  
When I was young, and green hope was  
in sight:

"For no man cares now to know why I  
sigh;  
And no man comes to sing me pleasant  
songs,  
Nor any brings me the sweet flowers that  
lie

"So thick in the gardens; therefore one  
so longs  
To see you, Launcelot; that we may be  
Like children once again, free from all  
wrongs

"Just for one night.' Did he not come  
to me?  
What thing could keep true Launcelot  
away  
If I said, 'Come?' there was one less  
than three

"In my quiet room that night, and we  
were gay;  
Till sudden I rose up, weak, pale, and  
sick,  
Because a bawling broke our dream up,  
yea

"I looked at Launcelot's face and could  
not speak,  
For he looked helpless too, for a little  
while;  
Then I remember how I tried to shriek,

"And could not, but fell down; from tile  
to tile  
The stones they threw up rattled o'er  
my head  
And made me dizzy; till within a while

"My maids were all about me, and my  
head  
On Launcelot's breast was being soothed  
away  
From its white chattering, until Launcelot  
said: . . .

"By God! I will not tell you more to-day,  
Judge any way you will: what matters  
it?  
You know quite well the story of that  
fray,

"How Launcelot still'd their bawling, the  
mad fit  
That caught up Gauwaine, all, all, verily,  
But just that which would save me; these  
things flit.

"Nevertheless you, O Sir Gauwaine, lie,  
Whatever may have happen'd these long  
years,  
God knows I speak truth, saying that  
you lie!

"All I have said is truth, by Christ's dear  
tears."  
She would not speak another word, but  
stood  
Turn'd sideways; listening, like a man  
who hears

His brother's trumpet sounding through  
the wood  
Of his foes' lances. She leaned eagerly,  
And gave a slight spring sometimes, as  
she could

At last hear something really; joyfully  
 Her cheek grew crimson, as the headlong  
     speed  
 Of the roan charger drew all men to  
     see,  
 The knight who came was Launcelot at  
     good need. 1858.

### THE GILLIFLOWER OF GOLD

A GOLDEN gilliflower to-day  
 I wore upon my helm alway,  
 And won the prize of this tourney.  
*Hah! hah! la belle jaune giroflée.*

However well Sir Giles might sit,  
 His sun was weak to wither it,  
 Lord Miles's blood was dew on it:  
*Hah! hah! la belle jaune giroflée.*

Although my spear in splinters flew,  
 From John's steel-coat, my eye was true;  
 I wheel'd about, and cried for you.  
*Hah! hah! la belle jaune giroflée.*

Yea, do not doubt my heart was good,  
 Though my sword flew like rotten wood,  
 To shout, although I scarcely stood,  
*Hah! hah! la belle jaune giroflée.*

My hand was steady too, to take  
 My axe from round my neck, and break  
 John's steel-coat up for my love's sake.  
*Hah! hah! la belle jaune giroflée.*

When I stood in my tent again,  
 Arming afresh, I felt a pain  
 Take hold of me, I was so fain —  
*Hah! hah! la belle jaune giroflée —*

To hear: *Honneur aux fils des preux!*  
 Right in my ears again, and shew  
 The gilliflower blossom'd new.  
*Hah! hah! la belle jaune giroflée.*

The Sieur Guillaume against me came,  
 His tabard bore three points of flame  
 From a red heart; with little blame, —  
*Hah! hah! la belle jaune giroflée, —*

Our tough spears crackled up like straw;  
 He was the first to turn and draw  
 His sword, that had nor speck nor flaw;  
*Hah! hah! la belle jaune giroflée.*

But I felt weaker than a maid,  
 And my brain, dizzied and afraid,  
 Within my helm a fierce tune play'd,  
*Hah! hah! la belle jaune giroflée,*

Until I thought of your dear head,  
 Bow'd to the gilliflower bed,  
 The yellow flowers stain'd with red;  
*Hah! hah! la belle jaune giroflée.*

Crash! how the swords met: *giroflée!*  
 The fierce tune in my helm would play,  
*La belle! la belle! jaune giroflée!*  
*Hah! hah! la belle jaune giroflée.*

Once more the great swords met again:  
 "La belle! la belle!" but who fell then?  
 Le Sieur Guillaume, who struck down  
     ten;  
*Hah! hah! la belle jaune giroflée.*

And as with mazed and unarm'd face,  
 Toward my own crown and the Queen's  
     place,  
 They led me at a gentle pace, —  
*Hah! hah! la belle jaune giroflée, —*

I almost saw your quiet head  
 Bow'd o'er the gilliflower bed,  
 The yellow flowers stain'd with red.  
*Hah! hah! la belle jaune giroflée.*  
 1858.

### SHAMEFUL DEATH

THERE were four of us about that bed;  
 The mass-priest knelt at the side,  
 I and his mother stood at the head,  
 Over his feet lay the bride;  
 We were quite sure that he was dead,  
 Though his eyes were open wide.

He did not die in the night,  
 He did not die in the day,  
 But in the morning twilight  
 His spirit pass'd away,  
 When neither sun nor moon was bright,  
 And the trees were merely gray.

He was not slain with the sword,  
 Knight's axe, or the knightly spear,  
 Yet spoke he never a word  
 After he came in here;  
 I cut away the cord  
 From the neck of my brother dear.

He did not strike one blow,  
 For the recreants came behind,  
 In a place where the hornbeams grow,  
 A path right hard to find,  
 For the hornbeam boughs swing so,  
 That the twilight makes it blind.

They lighted a great torch then,  
 When his arms were pinion'd fast,  
 Sir John the knight of the Fen,  
 Sir Guy of the Dolorous Blast,  
 With knights threescore and ten,  
 Hung brave Lord Hugh at last.

I am threescore and ten,  
 And my hair is all turn'd gray,  
 But I met Sir John of the Fen  
 Long ago on a summer day,  
 And am glad to think of the moment  
 when  
 I took his life away.

I am threescore and ten,  
 And my strength is mostly pass'd,  
 But long ago I and my men,  
 When the sky was overcast,  
 And the smoke roll'd over the reeds of the  
 fen,  
 Slew Guy of the Dolorous Blast.

And now, knights all of you,  
 I pray you pray for Sir Hugh,  
 A good knight and a true,  
 And for Alice, his wife, pray too.  
 1858.

### THE EVE OF CRECY

GOLD on her head, and gold on her  
 feet,  
 And gold where the hems of her kirtle  
 meet,  
 And a golden girdle round my sweet;  
*Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.*

Margaret's maids are fair to see,  
 Freshly dress'd and pleasantly;  
 Margaret's hair falls down to her knee;  
*Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.*

If I were rich I would kiss her feet;  
 I would kiss the place where the gold hems  
 meet,  
 And the golden kirtle round my sweet:  
*Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.*

Ah me! I have never touch'd her hand;  
 When the arrière-ban goes through the  
 land,  
 Six basnets under my pennon stand;  
*Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.*

And many an one grins under his hood:  
 Sir Lambert du Bois, with all his men  
 good,  
 Has neither food nor firewood;  
*Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.*

If I were rich I would kiss her feet,  
 And the golden girdle of my sweet,  
 And thereabouts where the gold hems  
 meet;  
*Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.*

Yet even now it is good to think,  
 While my poor varlets grumble and drink  
 In my desolate hall, where the fires  
 sink, —  
*Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite, —*

Of Margaret sitting glorious there,  
 In glory of gold and glory of hair,  
 And glory of glorious face most fair;  
*Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.*

Likewise to-night I make good cheer,  
 Because this battle draweth near:  
 For what have I to lose or fear?  
*Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.*

For, look you, my horse is good to prance  
 A right fair measure in this war-dance  
 Before the eyes of Philip of France;  
*Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.*

And sometime it may hap, perdie,  
 While my new towers stand up three  
 and three,  
 And my hall gets painted fair to see —  
*Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite. —*

That folks may say: Times change, by  
 the rood,  
 For Lambert, banneret of the wood,  
 Has heaps of food and firewood;  
*Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.*

And wonderful eyes, too, under the hood  
 Of a damsel of right noble blood.  
 St. Ives, for Lambert of the Wood!  
*Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite*  
 1858.



## THE SAILING OF THE SWORD

ACROSS the empty garden-beds,  
*When the Sword went out to sea,*  
 I scarcely saw my sisters' heads  
 Bowed each beside a tree.  
 I could not see the castle leads,  
*When the Sword went out to sea.*

Alicia wore a scarlet gown,  
*When the Sword went out to sea,*  
 But Ursula's was russet brown :  
 For the mist we could not see  
 The scarlet roofs of the good town,  
*When the Sword went out to sea.*

Green holly in Alicia's hand,  
*When the Sword went out to sea;*  
 With sere oak-leaves did Ursula stand;  
 Oh! yet alas for me!  
 I did but bear a peel'd white wand,  
*When the Sword went out to sea.*

O, russet brown and scarlet bright,  
*When the Sword went out to sea,*  
 My sisters wore; I wore but white :  
 Red, brown, and white, are three;  
 Three damozels; each had a knight,  
*When the Sword went out to sea.*

Sir Robert shouted loud, and said;  
*When the Sword went out to sea,*  
 "Alicia, while I see thy head,  
 What shall I bring for thee?"  
 "O, my sweet Lord, a ruby red :"  
*The Sword went out to sea.*

Sir Miles said, while the sails hung down,  
*When the Sword went out to sea,*  
 "O, Ursula! while I see the town,  
 What shall I bring for thee?"  
 "Dear knight, bring back a falcon  
 brown :"  
*The Sword went out to sea.*

But my Roland, no word he said  
*When the Sword went out to sea,*  
 But only turn'd away his head;  
 A quick shriek came from me :  
 "Come back, dear lord, to your white  
 maid!"  
*The Sword went out to sea.*

The hot sun bit the garden-beds  
*When the Sword came back from sea;*

Beneath an apple-tree our heads  
 Stretched out toward the sea;  
 Gray gleamed the thirsty castle-leads,  
*When the Sword came back from sea.*

Lord Robert brought a ruby red,  
*When the Sword came back from sea;*  
 He kissed Alicia on the head :  
 "I am come back to thee;  
 'Tis time, sweet love, that we were wed,  
*Now the Sword is back from sea!*"

Sir Miles he bore a falcon brown,  
*When the Sword came back from sea;*  
 His arms went round tall Ursula's gown :  
 "What joy, O love, but thee?  
 Let us be wed in the good town,  
*Now the Sword is back from sea!*"

My heart grew sick, no more afraid,  
*When the Sword came back from sea;*  
 Upon the deck a tall white maid  
 Sat on Lord Roland's knee;  
 His chin was press'd upon her head,  
*When the Sword came back from sea!*  
 1858.

## THE BLUE CLOSET

## THE DAMOZELS

LADY ALICE, lady Louise,  
 Between the wash of the tumbling seas  
 We are ready to sing, if so ye please :  
 So lay your long hands on the keys;  
 "Sing, *Laudate pueri.*"

*And ever the great bell overhead  
 Boom'd in the wind a knell for the dead,  
 Though no one toll'd it, a knell for the dead.*

## LADY LOUISE

Sister, let the measure swell  
 Not too loud; for you sing not well  
 If you drown the faint boom of the bell;  
 He is weary, so am I.

*And ever the chevron overhead  
 Flapp'd on the banner of the dead;  
 (Was he asleep, or was he dead?)*

## LADY ALICE

Alice the Queen, and Louise the Queen,  
 Two damozels wearing purple and green,  
 Four lone ladies dwelling here  
 From day to day and year to year;

And there is none to let us go;  
 To break the locks of the doors below,  
 Or shovel away the heaped-up snow;  
 And when we die no man will know  
 That we are dead; but they give us leave,  
 Once every year on Christmas-eve,  
 To sing in the Closet Blue one song;  
 And we should be so long, so long,  
 If we dared, in singing; for dream on  
 dream,  
 They float on in a happy stream;  
 Float from the gold strings, float from  
 the keys,  
 Float from the open'd lips of Louise;  
 But, alas! the sea-salt oozes through  
 The chinks of the tiles of the Closet Blue;

*And ever the great bell overhead  
 Booms in the wind a knell for the dead,  
 The wind plays on it a knell for the dead.*

#### THEY SING ALL TOGETHER

How long ago was it, how long ago,  
 He came to this tower with hands full of  
 snow?

"Kneel down, O love Louise, kneel  
 down!" he said,  
 And sprinkled the dusty snow over my  
 head.

He watch'd the snow melting, it ran  
 through my hair,  
 Ran over my shoulders, white shoulders  
 and bare.

"I cannot weep for thee, poor love Louise,  
 For my tears are all hidden deep under  
 the seas;

"In a gold and blue casket she keeps all  
 my tears,  
 But my eyes are no longer blue, as in old  
 years;

"Yea, they grow gray with time, grow  
 small and dry,  
 I am so feeble now, would I might die."

*And in truth the great bell overhead  
 Left off his pealing for the dead,  
 Perchance, because the wind was dead.*

Will he come back again, or is he dead?  
 O! is he sleeping, my scarf round his head?

Or did they strangle him as he lay there,  
 With the long scarlet scarf I used to  
 wear?

Only I pray thee, Lord, let him come  
 here!  
 Both his soul and his body to me are  
 most dear.

Dear Lord, that loves me, I wait to re-  
 ceive  
 Either body or spirit this wild Christmas-  
 eve,

*Through the floor shot up a lily red,  
 With a patch of earth from the land of the  
 dead,  
 For he was strong in the land of the dead.*

What matter that his cheeks were pale,  
 His kind kiss'd lips all gray?  
 "O, love Louise, have you waited long?"  
 "O, my lord Arthur, yea."

What if his hair that brushed her cheek  
 Was stiff with frozen rime?  
 His eyes were grown quite blue again,  
 As in the happy time.

"O, love Louise, this is the key  
 Of the happy golden land!  
 O, sister, across the bridge with me,  
 My eyes are full of sand.  
 What matter that I cannot see,  
 If ye take me by the hand?"

*And ever the great bell overhead,  
 And the tumbling seas mourn'd for the dead;  
 For their song ceased, and they were dead!*  
 1858.

#### THE HAYSTACK IN THE FLOODS

HAD she come all the way for this,  
 To part at last without a kiss?  
 Yea, had she borne the dirt and rain  
 That her own eyes might see him slain  
 Beside the haystack in the floods?

Along the dripping leafless woods,  
 The stirrup touching either shoe,  
 She rode astride as troopers do;  
 With kirtle kilted to her knee,  
 To which the mud splash'd wretchedly;  
 And the wet dripp'd from every tree

Upon her head and heavy hair,  
And on her eyelids broad and fair;  
The tears and rain ran down her face.

By fits and starts they rode apace,  
And very often was his place  
Far off from her; he had to ride  
Ahead, to see what might betide  
When the roads cross'd; and sometimes,  
when

There rose a murmuring from his men,  
Had to turn back with promises.  
Ah me! she had but little ease;  
And often for pure doubt and dread  
She sobb'd, made giddy in the head  
By the swift riding; while, for cold,  
Her slender fingers scarce could hold  
The wet reins; yea, and scarcely, too,  
She felt the foot within her shoe  
Against the stirrup: all for this,  
To part at last without a kiss  
Beside the haystack in the floods.

For when they near'd that old soak'd  
hay,

They saw across the only way  
That Judas, Godmar, and the three  
Red running lions dismally  
Grinn'd from his pennon, under which  
In one straight line along the ditch,  
They counted thirty heads.

So then

While Robert turn'd round to his men,  
She saw at once the wretched end,  
And, stooping down, tried hard to rend  
Her coif the wrong way from her head,  
And hid her eyes; while Robert said:  
"Nay, love, 'tis scarcely two to one;  
At Poitiers where we made them run  
So fast—why, sweet my love, good  
cheer,

The Gascon frontier is so near,  
Nought after us."

But: "O!" she said,  
"My God! my God! I have to tread  
The long way back without you; then  
The court at Paris; those six men;  
The gratings of the Chatelet;  
The swift Seine on some rainy day  
Like this, and people standing by,  
And laughing, while my weak hands try  
To recollect how strong men swim.  
All this, or else a life with him,  
For which I should be damned at last,  
Would God that this next hour were  
past!"

He answer'd not, but cried his cry,  
"St. George for Marny!" cheerily;  
And laid his hand upon her rein.  
Alas! no man of all his train  
Gave back that cheery cry again;  
And, while for rage his thumb beat fast  
Upon his sword-hilt, some one cast  
About his neck a kerchief long,  
And bound him.

Then they went along  
To Godmar; who said: "Now, Jehane,  
Your lover's life is on the wane  
So fast, that, if this very hour  
You yield not as my paramour,  
He will not see the rain leave off:  
Nay, keep your tongue from gibe and  
scoff  
Sir Robert, or I slay you now."

She laid her hand upon her brow,  
Then gazed upon the palm, as though  
She thought her forehead bled, and:  
"No!"

She said, and turn'd her head away,  
As there was nothing else to say,  
And everything was settled; red  
Grew Godmar's face from chin to head:  
"Jehane, on yonder hill there stands  
My castle, guarding well my lands;  
What hinders me from taking you,  
And doing that I list to do  
To your fair wilful body, while  
Your knight lies dead?"

A wicked smile  
Wrinkled her face, her lips grew thin,  
A long way out she thrust her chin:  
"You know that I should strangle you  
While you were sleeping; or bite through  
Your throat, by God's help: ah!" she  
said,

"Lord Jesus, pity your poor maid!  
For in such wise they hem me in,  
I cannot choose but sin and sin,  
Whatever happens: yet I think  
They could not make me eat or drink,  
And so should I just reach my rest."  
"Nay, if you do not my behest,  
O Jehane! though I love you well,"  
Said Godmar, "would I fail to tell  
All that I know?" "Foul lies," she  
said.

"Eh? lies, my Jehane? by God's head,  
At Paris folks would deem them true!  
Do you know, Jehane, they cry for you:  
'Jehane the brown! Jehane the brown!  
Give us Jehane to burn or drown!'

Eh! — gag me Robert! — sweet my friend,

This were indeed a piteous end  
For those long fingers, and long feet,  
And long neck, and smooth shoulders  
sweet;

An end that few men would forget  
That saw it. So, an hour yet:  
Consider, Jehane, which to take  
Of life or death!"

So, scarce awake,

Dismounting, did she leave that place,  
And totter some yards: with her face  
Turn'd upward to the sky she lay,  
Her head on a wet heap of hay,  
And fell asleep: and while she slept,  
And did not dream, the minutes crept  
Round to the twelve again; but she,  
Being waked at last, sigh'd quietly,  
And strangely childlike came, and said:  
"I will not." Straightway Godmar's  
head,

As though it hung on strong wires, turn'd  
Most sharply round, and his face burn'd.

For Robert, both his eyes were dry,  
He could not weep, but gloomily  
He seem'd to watch the rain; yea, too,  
His lips were firm; he tried once more  
To touch her lips; she reach'd out, sore  
And vain desire so tortured them,  
The poor gray lips, and now the hem  
Of his sleeve brush'd them.

With a start  
Up Godmar rose, thrust them apart;  
From Robert's throat he loosed the bands  
Of silk and mail; with empty hands  
Held out, she stood and gazed, and saw,  
The long bright blade without a flaw  
Glide out from Godmar's sheath, his  
hand

In Robert's hair; she saw him bend  
Back Robert's head; she saw him send  
The thin steel down; the blow told  
well,

Right backward the knight Robert fell,  
And moaned as dogs do, being half dead,  
Unwitting, as I deem: so then  
Godmar turn'd grinning to his men,  
Who ran, some five or six, and beat  
His head to pieces at their feet.

Then Godmar turn'd again and said:  
"So, Jehane, the first fitte is read!  
Take note, my lady, that your way  
Lies backward to the Chatelet!"

She shook her head and gazed awhile  
At her cold hands with a rueful smile,  
As though this thing had made her mad.

This was the parting that they had  
Beside the haystack in the floods.

1858.

## TWO RED ROSES ACROSS THE MOON

THERE was a lady lived in a hall,  
Large of her eyes and slim and tall;  
And ever she sung from noon to noon,  
*Two red roses across the moon.*

There was a knight came riding by  
In early spring, when the roads were dry;  
And he heard that lady sing at the noon,  
*Two red roses across the moon.*

Yet none the more he stopp'd at all,  
But he rode a-gallop past the hall;  
And left that lady singing at noon,  
*Two red roses across the moon.*

Because, forsooth, the battle was set,  
And the scarlet and blue had got to be  
met,  
He rode on the spur till the next warm  
noon:  
*Two red roses across the moon.*

But the battle was scatter'd from hill to  
hill,  
From the windmill to the watermill;  
And he said to himself, as it near'd the  
noon,  
*Two red roses across the moon.*

You scarce could see for the scarlet and  
blue,  
A golden helm or a golden shoe:  
So he cried, as the fight grew thick at the  
noon,  
*Two red roses across the moon!*

Verily then the gold bore through  
The huddled spears of the scarlet and  
blue;  
And they cried, as they cut them down  
at the noon,  
*Two red roses across the moon!*

I trow he stopp'd when ye rode again  
By the hall, though draggled sore with  
the rain;  
And his lips were pinch'd to kiss at the  
noon

*Two red roses across the moon.*

Under the may she stoop'd to the crown,  
All was gold, there was nothing of brown,  
And the horns blew up in the hall at noon,  
*Two red roses across the moon.* 1858.

### SIR GILES' WAR-SONG<sup>1</sup>

*Ho! is there any will ride with me,  
Sir Giles, le bon des barrières?*

The clink of arms is good to hear,  
The flap of pennons fair to see;  
*Ho! is there any will ride with me,  
Sir Giles, le bon des barrières?*

The leopards and lilies are fair to see;  
St. George Guienne! right good to hear:  
*Ho! is there any will ride with me;  
Sir Giles, le bon des barrières?*

I stood by the barrier,  
My coat being blazon'd fair to see;  
*Ho! is there any will ride with me,  
Sir Giles, le bon des barrières?*

Clisson put out his head to see,  
And lifted his basnet up to hear;  
I pull'd him through the bars to me,  
*Sir Giles, le bon des barrières.*

1858.

### NEAR AVALON

A SHIP with shields before the sun,  
Six maidens round the mast,  
A red-gold crown on every one,  
A green gown on the last.

The fluttering green banners there  
Are wrought with ladies' heads most fair,  
And a portraiture of Guenevere  
The middle of each sail doth bear.

<sup>1</sup> Browning wrote to Morris, on the appearance of the *Earthly Paradise*: "It is a double delight to me to read such poetry, and know you, of all the world, wrote it, — you whose songs I used to sing while galloping by Fiesole in old days, — 'Ho, is there any will ride with me?'" (J. W. Mackail's *Life of William Morris*, I, 133.)

A ship which sails before the wind,  
And round the helm six knights,  
Their heaumes are on, whereby, half  
blind  
They pass by many sights.

The tatter'd scarlet banners theré,  
Right soon will leave the spear-heads  
bare,  
Those six knights sorrowfully bear,  
In all their heaumes some yellow hair.  
1858.

### IN PRISON

WEARILY, drearily,  
Half the day long,  
Flap the great banners  
High over the stone;  
Strangely and eerily  
Sounds the wind's song,  
Bending the banner-poles.

While, all alone,  
Watching the loophole's spark,  
Lie I, with life all dark,  
Feet tether'd, hands fetter'd  
Fast to the stone,  
The grim wall, square letter'd  
With prison'd men's groan.

Still strain the banner-poles  
Through the wind's song,  
Westward the banner rolls  
Over my wrong. 1858.

### FROM THE LIFE AND DEATH OF JASON

#### TO THE SEA

O BITTER sea, tumultuous sea,  
Full many an ill is wrought by thee! —  
Unto the wasters of the land  
Thou holdest out thy wrinkled hand;  
And when they leave the conquered  
town,  
Whose black smoke makes thy surges  
brown,  
Driven betwixt thee and the sun,  
As the long day of blood is done,  
From many a league of glittering waves  
Thou smilest on them and their slaves.  
The thin bright-eyed Phœnician  
Thou drawest to thy waters wan,



With ruddy eve and golden morn  
Thou temptest him, until, forlorn,  
Unburied, under alien skies,  
Cast up ashore his body lies.

Yea, whoso sees thee from his door,  
Must ever long for more and more;  
Nor will the beechen bowl suffice,  
Or homespun robe of little price,  
Or hood well-woven from the fleece  
Undyed, or unspiced wine of Greece;  
So sore his heart is set upon  
Purple, and gold, and cinnamon;  
For as thou cravest, so he craves,  
Until he rolls beneath thy waves,  
Nor in some landlocked, unknown bay,  
Can satiate thee for one day.

Now, therefore, O thou bitter sea,  
With no long words we pray to thee,  
But ask thee, hast thou felt before  
Such strokes of the long ashen oar?  
And hast thou yet seen such a prow  
Thy rich and niggard waters plough?

Nor yet, O sea, shalt thou be cursed,  
If at thy hands we gain the worst,  
And, wrapt in water, roll about  
Blind-eyed, unheeding song or shout,  
Within thine eddies far from shore,  
Warmed by no sunlight any more.

Therefore, indeed, we joy in thee,  
And praise thy greatness, and will we  
Take at thy hands both good and ill,  
Yea, what thou wilt, and praise thee  
still,

Enduring not to sit at home,  
And wait until the last days come,  
When we no more may care to hold  
White bosoms under crowns of gold,  
And our dulled hearts no longer are  
Stirred by the clangorous noise of war,  
And hope within our souls is dead,  
And no joy is remembered.

So, if thou hast a mind to slay,  
Fair prize thou hast of us to-day;  
And if thou hast a mind to save,  
Great praise and honor shalt thou have;  
But whatso thou wilt do with us,  
Our end shall not be piteous,  
Because our memories shall live  
When folk forget the way to drive  
The black keel through the heaped-up  
sea,  
And half dried up thy waters be.

1867.

#### THE NYMPH'S SONG TO HYLAS <sup>1</sup>

I KNOW a little garden close  
Set thick with lily and red rose,  
Where I would wander if I might  
From dewy dawn to dewy night,  
And have one with me wandering.

And though within it no birds sing,  
And though no pillared house is there,  
And though the apple boughs are bare  
Of fruit and blossom, would to God,  
Her feet upon the green grass trod,  
And I beheld them as before.

There comes a murmur from the shore,  
And in the place two fair streams are,  
Drawn from the purple hills afar,  
Drawn down unto the restless sea;  
The hills whose flowers ne'er fed the bee,  
The shore no ship has ever seen,  
Still beaten by the billows green,<sup>2</sup>  
Whose murmur comes unceasingly  
Unto the place for which I cry.

For which I cry both day and night,  
For which I let slip all delight,  
That maketh me both deaf and blind,  
Careless to win, unskilled to find,  
And quick to lose what all men seek.

Yet tottering as I am, and weak,  
Still have I left a little breath  
To seek within the jaws of death  
An entrance to that happy place,  
To seek the unforgotten face  
Once seen, once kissed, once reft from me  
Anigh the murmuring of the sea. 1867.

#### ORPHEUS' SONG OF TRIUMPH

O DEATH, that makest life so sweet,  
O fear, with mirth before thy feet,  
What have ye yet in store for us,  
The conquerors, the glorious?

Men say: "For fear that thou shouldst  
die  
To-morrow, let to-day pass by  
Flower-crowned and singing," yet have  
we  
Passed our to-day upon the sea,  
Or in a poisonous unknown land,  
With fear and death on either hand,

<sup>1</sup> This song reappears under the title "A Garden by the Sea" in *Poems by the Way*, 1891, with slight variations in the text, the most important of which is noted below.

<sup>2</sup> In "A Garden by the Sea," these three lines read:  
Dark hills whose heath-bloom feeds no bee,  
Dark shore no ship has ever seen,  
Tormented by the billows green.

And listless when the day was done  
 Have scarcely hoped to see the sun  
 Dawn on the morrow of the earth,  
 Nor in our hearts have thought of mirth.  
 And while the world lasts, scarce again  
 Shall any sons of men bear pain  
 Like we have borne, yet be alive.

So surely not in vain we strive  
 Like other men for our reward;  
 Sweet peace and deep, the checkered  
 sword

Beneath the ancient mulberry trees,  
 The smooth-paved gilded palaces,  
 Where the shy thin-clad damsels sweet  
 Make music with their gold-ringed feet.  
 The fountain court amidst of it,  
 Where the short-haired slave-maidens  
 sit,

While on the veined pavement lie  
 The honied things and spicery  
 Their arms have borne from out the  
 town.

The dancers on the thymy down  
 In summer twilight, when the earth  
 Is still of all things but their mirth,  
 And echoes borne upon the wind  
 Of others in like way entwined.

The merchant-town's fair market-place,  
 Where over many a changing face  
 The pigeons of the temple flit,  
 And still the outland merchants sit  
 Like kings above their merchandise,  
 Lying to foolish men and wise.

Ah! if they heard that we were come  
 Into the bay, and bringing home  
 That which all men have talked about,  
 Some men with rage, and some with  
 doubt,

Some with desire, and some with praise;  
 Then would the people throng the ways,  
 Nor heed the outland merchandise,  
 Nor any talk, from fools or wise,  
 But tales of our accomplished quest.

What soul within the house shall rest  
 When we come home? The wily king  
 Shall leave his throne to see the thing;  
 No man shall keep the landward gate,  
 The hurried traveller shall wait  
 Until our bulwarks graze the quay;  
 Unslain the milk-white bull shall be  
 Beside the quivering altar-flame;  
 Scarce shall the maiden clasp for shame  
 Over her breast the raiment thin  
 The morn that Argo cometh in.

Then cometh happy life again  
 That payeth well our toil and pain

In that sweet hour, when all our woe  
 But as a pensive tale we know,  
 Nor yet remember deadly fear;  
 For surely now if death be near,  
 Unthought-of is it, and unseen  
 What sweet is, that hath bitter been.

1867.

#### SONGS OF ORPHEUS AND THE SIRENS

##### *Sirens*

O HAPPY seafarers are ye,  
 And surely all your ills are past,  
 And toil upon the land and sea,  
 Since ye are brought to us at last.  
 To you the fashion of the world,  
 Wide lands laid waste, fair cities  
 burned,  
 And plagues, and kings from kingdoms  
 hurled,  
 Are nought, since hither ye have  
 turned.

For as upon this beach we stand,  
 And o'er our heads the sea-fowl flit,  
 Our eyes behold a glorious land,  
 And soon shall ye be kings of it.

##### *Orpheus*

A little more, a little more,  
 O carriers of the Golden Fleece,  
 A little labor with the oar,  
 Before we reach the land of Greece.

E'en now perchance faint rumors reach  
 Men's ears of this our victory,  
 And draw them down unto the beach  
 To gaze across the empty sea.

But since the longed-for day is nigh,  
 And scarce a God could stay us now,  
 Why do ye hang your heads and sigh,  
 Hindering for nought our eager prow?

##### *Sirens*

Ah, had ye chanced to reach the home  
 On which your fond desires were set,  
 Into what troubles had ye come?  
 Short love and joy, and long regret.

But now, but now, when ye have lain  
 Asleep with us a little while  
 Beneath the washing of the main,  
 How calm shall be your waking smile!

For ye shall smile to think of life  
 That knows no troublous change or  
     fear,  
 No unavailing bitter strife,  
 That ere its time brings trouble near.

*Orpheus*

Is there some murmur in your ears,  
 That all that we have done is nought,  
 And nothing ends our cares or fears,  
 Till the last fear is on us brought?

*Sirens*

Alas! and will ye stop your ears,  
 In vain desire to do aught,  
 And wish to live 'mid cares and fears,  
 Until the last fear makes you nought?

*Orpheus*

Is not the May-time now on earth,  
 When close against the city wall  
 The folks are singing in their mirth,  
 While on their heads the May-flowers  
     fall?

*Sirens*

Yes, May is come, and its sweet breath  
 Shall well-nigh make you weep to-day,  
 And pensive with swift-coming death,  
 Shall ye be satiate of the May.

*Orpheus*

Shall not July bring fresh delight,  
 As underneath green trees ye sit,  
 And o'er some damsel's body white  
 The noontide shadows change and  
     flit?

*Sirens*

No new delight July shall bring  
 But ancient fear and fresh desire,  
 And spite of every lovely thing,  
 Of July surely shall you tire.

*Orpheus*

And now, when August comes on thee,  
 And 'mid the golden sea of corn  
 The merry reapers thou mayst see,  
 Wilt thou still think the earth forlorn?

*Sirens*

Set flowers upon thy short-lived head,  
 And in thine heart forgetfulness  
 Of man's hard toil, and scanty bread,  
 And weary of those days no less.

*Orpheus*

Or wilt thou climb the sunny hill,  
 In the October afternoon,  
 To watch the purple earth's blood fill  
 The gray vat to the maiden's tune?

*Sirens*

When thou beginnest to grow old,  
 Bring back remembrance of thy bliss  
 With that the shining cup doth hold,  
 And weary helplessly of this.

*Orpheus*

Or pleasureless shall we pass by  
 The long cold night and leaden day,  
 That song, and tale, and minstrelsy,  
 Shall make as merry as the May?

*Sirens*

List then, to-night, to some old tale  
 Until the tears o'erflow thine eyes;  
 But what shall all these things avail,  
 When sad to-morrow comes and dies?

*Orpheus*

And when the world is born again,  
 And with some fair love, side by side,  
 Thou wanderest 'twixt the sun and rain,  
 In that fresh love-begetting tide;

Then, when the world is born again,  
 And the sweet world before thee lies,  
 Shall thy heart think of coming pain,  
 Or vex itself with memories?

*Sirens*

Ah! then the world is born again  
 With burning love unsatisfied,  
 And new desires fond and vain,  
 And weary days from tide to tide.

Ah! when the world is born again,  
 A little day is soon gone by,  
 When thou, unmoved by sun or rain,  
 Within a cold straight house shalt lie.

Ah, will ye go, and whither then  
 Will ye go from us, soon to die,  
 To fill your three-score years and ten,  
 With many an unnamed misery?

And this the wretchedest of all,  
 That when upon your lonely eyes  
 The last faint heaviness shall fall  
 Ye shall bethink you of our cries,

Come back, nor grown old, seek in vain  
 To hear us sing across the sea.  
 Come back, come back, come back again,  
 Come back, O fearful Minyae!

*Orpheus*

Ah, once again, ah, once again,  
 The black prow plunges through the  
 sea,  
 Nor yet shall all your toil be vain,  
 Nor yet forgot, O Minyae. 1867.

INVOCATION TO CHAUCER

FROM THE LAST BOOK OF THE LIFE AND DEATH OF  
 JASON

So ends the winning of the Golden  
 Fleece —  
 So ends the tale of that sweet rest and  
 peace  
 That unto Jason and his love befell;  
 Another story now my tongue must tell,  
 And tremble in the telling. Would  
 that I  
 Had but some portion of that mastery  
 That from the rose-hung lanes of woody  
 Kent  
 Through these five hundred years such  
 songs have sent  
 To us, who meshed within this smoky  
 net  
 Of unjoying labor, love them yet.  
 And thou, O Master! — Yea, my Master  
 still,  
 Whatever feet have scaled Parnassus'  
 hill,  
 Since like thy measures, clear and sweet  
 and strong,  
 Thames' stream scarce fettered drave the  
 dace along  
 Unto the bastioned bridge, his only  
 chain. —  
 O Master, pardon me, if yet in vain  
 Thou art my Master, and I fail to bring;  
 Before men's eyes the image of the thing  
 My heart is filled with: thou whose  
 dreamy eyes  
 Beheld the flush to Cressid's cheeks arise,  
 When Troilus rode up the praising street,  
 As clearly as they saw thy townsmen  
 meet  
 Those who in vineyards of Poitou with-  
 stood  
 The glittering horror of the steel-topped  
 wood. 1867.

AN APOLOGY

PROLOGUE OF THE EARTHLY PARADISE

Of Heaven or Hell I have no power to  
 sing,  
 I cannot ease the burden of your fears,  
 Or make quick-coming death a little  
 thing,  
 Or bring again the pleasure of past years,  
 Nor for my words shall ye forget your  
 tears,  
 Or hope again for aught that I can say,  
 The idle singer of an empty day.

But rather, when aweary of your mirth,  
 From full hearts still unsatisfied ye sigh,  
 And, feeling kindly unto all the earth,  
 Grudge every minute as it passes by,  
 Made the more mindful that the sweet  
 days die —  
 — Remember me a little then I pray,  
 The idle singer of an empty day.

The heavy trouble, the bewildering care  
 That weighs us down who live and earn  
 our bread,  
 These idle verses have no power to bear;  
 So let me sing of names remembered,  
 Because they, living not, can ne'er be  
 dead,  
 Or long time take their memory quite  
 away  
 From us poor singers of an empty day.

Dreamer of dreams, born out of my due  
 time,  
 Why should I strive to set the crooked  
 straight?  
 Let it suffice me that my murmuring  
 rhyme  
 Beats with light wing against the ivory  
 gate,  
 Telling a tale not too importunate  
 To those who in the sleepy region stay,  
 Lulled by the singer of an empty day.

Folk say, a wizard to a northern king  
 At Christmas-tide such wondrous things  
 did show,  
 That through one window men beheld  
 the spring,  
 And through another saw the summer  
 glow,  
 And through a third the fruited vines  
 a-row,

While still, unheard, but in its wonted way,  
Piped the drear wind of that December  
day.

So with this Earthly Paradise it is,  
If ye will read aright, and pardon me,  
Who strive to build a shadowy isle of bliss

Midmost the beating of the steely sea,  
Where tossed about all hearts of men  
must be;  
Whose ravening monsters mighty men  
shall slay,  
Not the poor singer of an empty day.  
1868.

## ATALANTA'S RACE

### ARGUMENT

Atalanta, daughter of King Schœneus, not willing to lose her virgin's estate, made it a law to all suitors that they should run a race with her in the public place, and if they failed to overcome her should die unrevenged; and thus many brave men perished. At last came Milanion, the son of Amphidamas, who, outrunning her with the help of Venus, gained the virgin and wedded her.

THROUGH thick Arcadian woods a hunter  
went,  
Following the beasts upon a fresh spring  
day;  
But since his horn-tipped bow but seldom  
bent,  
Now at the noontide nought had happened  
to slay,  
Within a vale he called his hounds away,  
Harkening the echoes of his lone voice  
cling  
About the cliffs and through the beech-  
trees ring.

But when they ended, still awhile he stood,  
And but the sweet familiar thrush could  
hear,  
And all the day-long noises of the wood,  
And o'er the dry leaves of the vanished  
year  
His hounds' feet pattering as they drew  
anear,  
And heavy breathing from their heads  
low hung,  
To see the mighty cornel bow unstrung.

Then smiling did he turn to leave the  
place,  
But with his first step some new fleeting  
thought  
A shadow cast across his sun-burnt face;  
I think the golden net that April brought  
From some warm world his wavering soul  
had caught;  
For, sunk in vague sweet longing, did he  
go  
Betwixt the trees with doubtful steps and  
slow.

Yet howsoever slow he went, at last  
The trees grew sparser, and the wood  
was done;  
Whereon one farewell backward look he  
cast,  
Then, turning round to see what place  
was won,  
With shaded eyes looked underneath the  
sun,  
And o'er green meads and new-turned  
furrows brown  
Beheld the gleaming of King Schœneus'  
town.

So thitherward he turned, and on each  
side  
The folk were busy on the teeming land,  
And man and maid from the brown fur-  
rows cried,  
Or midst the newly blossomed vines did  
stand,  
And as the rustic weapon pressed the hand  
Thought of the nodding of the well-filled  
ear,  
Or how the knife the heavy bunch should  
shear.

Merry it was: about him sung the birds,  
The spring flowers bloomed along the firm  
dry road,  
The sleek-skinned mothers of the sharp-  
horned herds  
Now for the barefoot milking-maidens  
lowed;  
While from the freshness of his blue abode,  
Glad his death-bearing arrows to forget,  
The broad sun blazed, nor scattered  
plagues as yet.



Through such fair things unto the gates  
 he came,  
 And found them open, as though peace  
 were there;  
 Wherethrough, unquestioned of his race  
 or name,  
 He entered, and along the streets 'gan fare,  
 Which at the first of folk were well-nigh  
 bare;  
 But pressing on, and going more hastily,  
 Men hurrying too he 'gan at last to see.

Following the last of these he still pressed  
 on,  
 Until an open space he came unto,  
 Where wreaths of fame had oft been lost  
 and won,  
 For feats of strength folks there were  
 wont to do.  
 And now our hunter looked for some-  
 thing new,  
 Because the whole wide space was bare,  
 and stilled  
 The high seats were, with eager people  
 filled.

There with the others to a seat he gat,  
 Whence he beheld a broidered canopy,  
 'Neath which in fair array King Schoeneus  
 sat  
 Upon his throne with councillors thereby;  
 And underneath his well-wrought seat  
 and high,  
 He saw a golden image of the sun,  
 A silver image of the Fleet-foot One.

A brazen altar stood beneath their feet  
 Whereon a thin flame flicker'd in the wind;  
 Nigh this a herald clad in raiment meet  
 Made ready even now his horn to wind,  
 By whom a huge man held a sword,  
 entwined  
 With yellow flowers; these stood a little  
 space  
 From off the altar, nigh the starting place.

And there two runners did the sign abide,  
 Foot set to foot, — a young man slim and  
 fair,  
 Crisp-hair'd, well knit, with firm limbs  
 often tried  
 In places where no man his strength may  
 spare:  
 Dainty his thin coat was, and on his hair  
 A golden circlet of renown he wore,  
 And in his hand an olive garland bore.

But on this day with whom shall he con-  
 tend?  
 A maid stood by him like Diana clad  
 When in the woods she lists her bow to  
 bend,  
 Too fair for one to look on and be glad,  
 Who scarcely yet has thirty summers  
 had,  
 If he must still behold her from afar;  
 Too fair to let the world live free from  
 war.

She seem'd all earthly matters to forget;  
 Of all tormenting lines her face was clear;  
 Her wide gray eyes upon the goal were set  
 Calm and unmov'd as though no soul were  
 near.  
 But her foe trembled as a man in fear,  
 Nor from her loveliness one moment  
 turn'd  
 His anxious face with fierce desire that  
 burn'd.

Now through the hush there broke the  
 trumpet's clang  
 Just as the setting sun made eventide.  
 Then from light feet a spurt of dust there  
 sprang,  
 And swiftly were they running side by  
 side;  
 But silent did the thronging folk abide  
 Until the turning-post was reach'd at  
 last,  
 And round about it still abreast they  
 passed.

But when the people saw how close they  
 ran,  
 When half-way to the starting-point they  
 were,  
 A cry of joy broke forth, whereat the  
 man  
 Headed the white-foot runner, and drew  
 near  
 Unto the very end of all his fear;  
 And scarce his straining feet the ground  
 could feel,  
 And bliss unhop'd for o'er his heart 'gan  
 steal.

But 'midst the loud victorious shouts he  
 heard  
 Her footsteps drawing nearer, and the  
 sound  
 Of fluttering raiment, and thereat  
 afeared

His flush'd and eager face he turn'd  
around,  
And even then he felt her past him  
bound  
Fleet as the wind, but scarcely saw her  
there  
Till on the goal she laid her fingers fair.

There stood she breathing like a little  
child

Amid some warlike clamor laid asleep,  
For no victorious joy her red lips smil'd,  
Her cheek its wonted freshness did but  
keep;

No glance lit up her clear gray eyes and  
deep,

Though some divine thought soften'd all  
her face

As once more rang the trumpet through  
the place.

But her late foe stopp'd short amidst his  
course,

One moment gaz'd upon her piteously,  
Then with a groan his lingering feet did  
force

To leave the spot whence he her eyes  
could see;

And, changed like one who knows his  
time must be

But short and bitter, without any word  
He knelt before the bearer of the sword;

Then high rose up the gleaming deadly  
blade

Bar'd of its flowers, and through the  
crowded place

Was silence now, and midst of it the  
maid

Went by the poor wretch at a gentle pace,  
And he to hers upturn'd his sad white  
face;

Nor did his eyes behold another sight  
Ere on his soul there fell eternal light.

So was the pageant ended, and all folk  
Talking of this and that familiar thing  
In little groups from that sad concourse  
broke,

For now the shrill bats were upon the  
wing,

And soon dark night would slay the  
evening,

And in dark gardens sang the nightingale  
Her little-headed, oft-repeated tale.

And with the last of all the hunter went,  
Who, wondering at the strange sight he  
had seen,

Prayed an old man to tell him what it  
meant,

Both why the vanquished man so slain  
had been,

And if the maiden were an earthly queen,  
Or rather what much more she seemed to  
be,

No sharer in this world's mortality.

"Stranger," said he, "I pray she soon  
may die

Whose lovely youth has slain so many  
an one!

King Schoeneus' daughter is she verily,  
Who when her eyes first looked upon the  
sun

Was fain to end her life but new begun,  
For he had vowed to leave but men  
alone

Sprung from his loins when he from earth  
was gone.

"Therefore he bade one leave her in the  
wood,

And let wild things deal with her as they  
might,

But this being done, some cruel god  
thought good

To save her beauty in the world's despite;  
Folk say that her, so delicate and white

As now she is, a rough root-grubbing  
bear

Amidst her shapeless cubs at first did rear.

"In course of time the woodfolk slew  
her nurse,

And to their rude abode the youngling  
brought,

And reared her up to be a kingdom's  
curse;

Who grown a woman, of no kingdom  
thought,

But armed and swift, 'mid beasts destruc-  
tion wrought,

Nor spared two shaggy centaur kings to  
slay

To whom her body seemed an easy prey.

"So to this city, led by fate, she came  
Whom known by signs, whereof I cannot  
tell,

King Schoeneus for his child at last did  
claim.

Nor otherwhere since that day doth she  
 dwell  
 Sending too many a noble soul to hell—  
 What! thine eyes glisten! what then,  
 thinkest thou  
 Her shining head unto the yoke to bow?

"Listen, my son, and love some other  
 maid,  
 For she the saffron gown will never wear,  
 And on no flower-strewn couch shall she  
 be laid,  
 Nor shall her voice make glad a lover's  
 ear:

Yet if of Death thou hast not any fear,  
 Yea, rather, if thou lov'st him utterly,  
 Thou still may'st woo her ere thou com'st  
 to die,

"Like him that on this day thou sawest  
 lie dead;

For, fearing as I deem the sea-born one,  
 The maid has vowed e'en such a man to  
 wed

As in the course her swift feet can out-  
 run,

But whoso fails herein, his days are  
 done:

He came the highest that was slain to-day,  
 Although with him I deem she did but  
 play.

"Behold, such mercy Atalanta gives  
 To those that long to win her loveliness;  
 Be wise! be sure that many a maid there  
 lives

Gentler than she, of beauty little less,  
 Whose swimming eyes thy loving words  
 shall bless,

When in some garden, knee set close to  
 knee,

Thou sing'st the song that love may teach  
 to thee."

So to the hunter spake that ancient man,  
 And left him for his own home presently:  
 But he turned round, and through the  
 moonlight wan

Reached the thick wood, and there 'twixt  
 tree and tree

Distraught he passed the long night  
 feverishly,

'Twixt sleep and waking, and at dawn  
 arose

To wage hot war against his speechless  
 foes.

There to the hart's flank seemed his shaft  
 to grow,

As panting down the broad green glades  
 he flew,

There by his horn the Dryads well might  
 know

His thrust against the bear's heart had  
 been true,

And there Adonis' bane his javelin slew,  
 But still in vain through rough and

smooth he went,  
 For none the more his restlessness was  
 spent.

So wandering, he to Argive cities came,  
 And in the lists with valiant men he stood,

And by great deeds he won him praise  
 and fame,

And heaps of wealth for little-valued  
 blood.

But none of all these things, or life,  
 seemed good

Unto his heart, where still unsatisfied  
 A ravenous longing warred with fear  
 and pride.

Therefore it happed when but a month  
 had gone

Since he had left King Schœneus' city old,  
 In hunting-gear again, again alone

The forest-bordered meads did he behold,  
 Where still mid thoughts of August's

quivering gold  
 Folk hoed the wheat, and clipped the  
 vine in trust

Of faint October's purple-foaming must.

And once again he passed the peaceful  
 gate,

While to his beating heart his lips did lie,  
 That owning not victorious love and fate,

Said, half aloud, "And here too must I  
 try,

To win of alien men the mastery,  
 And gather for my head fresh meed of

fame  
 And cast new glory on my father's name."

In spite of that, how beat his heart,  
 when first

Folk said to him, "And art thou come  
 to see

That which still makes our city's name  
 accurst

Among all mothers for its cruelty?  
 Then know indeed that fate is good to thee

Because to-morrow a new luckless one  
Against the whitefoot maid is pledged to  
run."

So on the morrow with no curious eyes  
As once he did, that piteous sight he saw,  
Nor did that wonder in his heart arise  
As toward the goal the conquering maid  
'gan draw,

Nor did he gaze upon her eyes with awe,  
Too full the pain of longing filled his  
heart

For fear or wonder there to have a part.

But O, how long the night was ere it  
went!

How long it was before the dawn begun  
Showed to the wakening birds the sun's  
intent

That not in darkness should the world  
be done!

And then, and then, how long before the  
sun

Bade silently the toilers of the earth  
Get forth to fruitless cares or empty  
mirth!

And long it seemed that in the market-  
place

He stood and saw the chaffering folk go  
by,

Ere from the ivory throne King Schœ-  
neus' face

Looked down upon the murmur royally,  
But then came trembling that the time  
was nigh

When he midst pitying looks his love  
must claim,

And jeering voices must salute his name.

But as the throng he pierced to gain the  
throne,

His alien face distraught and anxious told  
What hopeless errand he was bound  
upon,

And, each to each, folk whispered to  
behold

His godlike limbs; nay, and one woman  
old

As he went by must pluck him by the  
sleeve

And pray him yet that wretched love to  
leave.

For sidling up she said, "Canst thou live  
twice,

Fair son? canst thou have joyful youth  
again,

That thus thou goest to the sacrifice  
Thyself the victim? nay then, all in vain  
Thy mother bore her longing and her pain,  
And one more maiden on the earth must  
dwell

Hopeless of joy, nor fearing death and  
hell.

"O, fool, thou knowest not the compact  
then

That with the three-formed goddess she  
has made

To keep her from the loving lips of men,  
And in no saffron gown to be arrayed,  
And therewithal with glory to be paid,  
And love of her the moonlit river sees  
White 'gainst the shadow of the formless  
trees.

"Come back, and I myself will pray for  
thee

Unto the sea-born framer of delights,  
To give thee her who on the earth may be  
The fairest stirrer up to death and fights,  
To quench with hopeful days and joyous  
nights

The flame that doth thy youthful heart  
consume:

Come back, nor give thy beauty to the  
tomb."

How should he listen to her earnest  
speech?

Words, such as he not once or twice had  
said

Unto himself, whose meaning scarce could  
reach

The firm abode of that sad hardihead—  
He turned about, and through the market  
stead

Swiftly he passed, until before the throne  
In the cleared space he stood at last  
alone.

Then said the King, "Stranger, what  
dost thou here?

Have any of my folk done ill to thee?  
Or art thou of the forest men in fear?

Or art thou of the sad fraternity  
Who still will strive my daughter's mates  
to be,

Staking their lives to win an earthly  
bliss,

The lonely maid, the friend of Artemis?"

"O King," he said "thou sayest the word indeed;

Nor will I quit the strife till I have won  
My sweet delight, or death to end my need.

And know that I am called Milanion,  
Of King Amphidamas the well-loved son:  
So fear not that to thy old name, O King,  
Much loss or shame my victory will bring."

"Nay, Prince," said Schœneus, "welcome to this land

Thou wert indeed, if thou wert here to try  
Thy strength 'gainst some one mighty of his hand;

Nor would we grudge thee well-won mastery.

But now, why wilt thou come to me to die,

And at my door lay down thy luckless head,

Swelling the band of the unhappy dead,

"Whose curses even now my heart doth fear?

Lo, I am old, and know what life can be,  
And what a bitter thing is death anear.

O, Son! be wise, and harken unto me,  
And if no other can be dear to thee,

At least as now, yet is the world full wide,  
And bliss in seeming hopeless hearts may hide:

"But if thou lovest life, then all is lost."

"Nay, King," Milanion said, "thy words are vain.

Doubt not that I have counted well the cost.

But say, on what day wilt thou that I gain

Fulfilled delight, or death to end my pain.

Right glad were I if it could be to-day,  
And all my doubts at rest for ever lay."

"Nay," said King Schœneus, "thus it shall not be,

But rather shalt thou let a month go by,  
And weary with thy prayers for victory

What god thou know'st the kindest and most nigh.

So doing, still perchance thou shalt not die:

And with my goodwill wouldst thou have the maid,

For of the equal gods I grow afraid.

"And until then, O Prince, be thou my guest,

And all these troublous things awhile forget."

"Nay," said he, "couldst thou give my soul good rest,

And on mine head a sleepy garland set,  
Then had I 'scaped the meshes of the net,

Nor shouldst thou hear from me another word;

But now, make sharp thy fearful heading-sword.

"Yet will I do what son of man may do,  
And promise all the gods may most desire,

That to myself I may at least be true;  
And on that day my heart and limbs so tire,

With utmost strain and measureless desire,  
That, at the worst, I may but fall asleep

When in the sunlight round that sword shall sweep."

He went therewith, nor anywhere would bide,

But unto Argos restlessly did wend;

And there, as one who lays all hope aside,  
Because the leech has said his life must end,

Silent farewell he bade to foe and friend,  
And took his way unto the restless sea,

For there he deemed his rest and help might be.

UPON the shore of Argolis there stands  
A temple to the goddess that he sought,

That, turned unto the lion-bearing lands,  
Fenced from the east, of cold winds hath

no thought,

Though to no homestead there the sheaves are brought,

No groaning press torments the close-clipped murk,

Lonely the fane stands, far from all men's work.

Pass through a close, set thick with myrtle-trees,

Through the brass doors that guard the holy place,

And entering, hear the washing of the seas

That twice a day rise high above the base,



And with the south-west urging them,  
 embrace  
 The marble feet of her that standeth  
 there  
 That shrink not, naked though they be  
 and fair.

Small is the fane through which the sea-  
 wind sings  
 About Queen Venus' well-wrought image  
 white,  
 But hung around are many precious  
 things,  
 The gifts of those who, longing for de-  
 light,  
 Have hung them there within the goddess'  
 sight,  
 And in return have taken at her hands  
 The living treasures of the Grecian lands.

And thither now has come Milanion,  
 And showed unto the priests' wide open  
 eyes  
 Gifts fairer than all those that there have  
 shone,  
 Silk cloths, inwrought with Indian fan-  
 tasies,  
 And bowls inscribed with sayings of the  
 wise  
 Above the deeds of foolish living things;  
 And mirrors fit to be the gifts of kings.

And now before the Sea-born One he  
 stands,  
 By the sweet veiling smoke made dim  
 and soft,  
 And while the incense trickles from his  
 hands,  
 And while the odorous smoke-wreaths  
 hang aloft,  
 Thus doth he pray to her: "O Thou,  
 who oft  
 Has holpen man and maid in their dis-  
 tress  
 Despise me not for this my wretchedness!

"O goddess, among us who dwell below,  
 Kings and great men, great for a little  
 while,  
 Have pity on the lowly heads that bow,  
 Nor hate the hearts that love them with-  
 out guile;  
 Wilt thou be worse than these, and is  
 thy smile  
 A vain device of him who set thee here,  
 An empty dream of some artificer?

"O great one, some men love, and are  
 ashamed;  
 Some men are weary of the bonds of love;  
 Yea, and by some men lightly art thou  
 blamed,  
 That from thy toils their lives they can-  
 not move,  
 And 'mid the ranks of men their manhood  
 prove.  
 Alas! O goddess, if thou slayest me,  
 What new immortal can I serve but thee?

"Think then, will it bring honor to thy  
 head  
 If folk say, 'Everything aside he cast  
 And to all fame and honor was he dead,  
 And to his one hope now is dead at last,  
 Since all unholpen he is gone and past:  
 Ah, the gods love not man, for certainly,  
 He to his helper did not cease to cry.'

"Nay, but thou wilt help; they who died  
 before  
 Not single-hearted as I deem came here,  
 Therefore unthanked they laid their gifts  
 before  
 Thy stainless feet, still shivering with  
 their fear,  
 Lest in their eyes their true thought  
 might appear,  
 Who sought to be the lords of that fair  
 town,  
 Dreaded of men and winners of renown.

"O Queen, thou knowest I pray not for  
 this:  
 O set us down together in some place  
 Where not a voice can break our heaven  
 of bliss,  
 Where nought but rocks and I can see  
 her face,  
 Softening beneath the marvel of thy grace,  
 Where not a foot our vanished steps can  
 track —  
 The golden age, the golden age come  
 back!

"O fairest, hear me now who do thy will,  
 Plead for thy rebel that he be not slain,  
 But live and love and be thy servant  
 still;  
 Ah, give her joy and take away my pain,  
 And thus two long-enduring servants gain.  
 An easy thing this is to do for me,  
 What need of my vain words to weary  
 thee.

"But none the less, this place will I not  
leave

Until I needs must go my death to meet,  
Or at thy hands some happy sign receive  
That in great joy we twain may one day  
greet

Thy presence here and kiss thy silver feet,  
Such as we deem thee, fair beyond all  
words,

Victorious o'er our servants and our  
lords."

Then from the altar back a space he drew,  
But from the Queen turned not his face  
away,

But 'gainst a pillar leaned, until the blue  
That arched the sky, at ending of the day,  
Was turned to ruddy gold and changing  
gray,

And clear, but low, the nigh-ebbed wind-  
less sea

In the still evening murmured cease-  
lessly.

And there he stood when all the sun was  
down,

Nor had he moved, when the dim golden  
light,

Like the far lustre of a godlike town,  
Had left the world to seeming hopeless  
night,

Nor would he move the more when wan  
moonlight

Streamed through the pillars for a little  
while,

And lighted up the white Queen's change-  
less smile.

Nought noted he the shallow-flowing sea  
As step by step it set the wrack a-swim;  
The yellow torchlight nothing noted he  
Wherein with fluttering gown and half-  
bared limb

The temple damsels sung their midnight  
hymn;

And nought the doubled stillness of the  
fane

When they were gone and all was hushed  
again.

But when the waves had touched the  
marble base,

And steps the fish swim over twice a-day,  
The dawn beheld him sunken in his place  
Upon the floor; and sleeping there he lay,  
Not heeding aught the little jets of spray

The roughened sea brought nigh, across  
him cast,

For as one dead all thought from him  
had passed.

Yet long before the sun had showed his  
head,

Long ere the varied hangings on the wall  
Had gained once more their blue and  
green and red,

He rose as one some well-known sign  
doth call

When war upon the city's gates doth fall,  
And scarce like one fresh risen out of  
sleep,

He 'gan again his broken watch to keep.

Then he turned round; not for the sea-  
gull's cry

That wheeled above the temple in his  
flight,

Not for the fresh south wind that lov-  
ingly

Breathed on the new-born day and dying  
night,

But some strange hope 'twixt fear and  
great delight

Drew round his face, now flushed, now  
pale and wan,

And still constrained his eyes the sea to  
scan.

Now a faint light lit up the southern sky  
Not sun or moon, for all the world was  
gray,

But this a bright cloud seemed, that  
drew anigh,

Lighting the dull waves that beneath it  
lay

As toward the temple still it took its way,  
And still grew greater, till Milanion

Saw nought for dazzling light that round  
him shone.

But as he staggered with his arms out-  
spread,

Delicious unnamed odors breathed  
around,

For languid happiness he bowed his head,  
And with wet eyes sank down upon the  
ground,

Nor wished for aught, nor any dream he  
found

To give him reason for that happiness,  
Or make him ask more knowledge of his  
bliss.

At last his eyes were cleared, and he  
 could see  
 Through happy tears the goddess face to  
 face  
 With that faint image of Divinity,  
 Whose well-wrought smile and dainty  
 changeless grace  
 Until that morn so gladdened all the place;  
 Then he, unwitting cried aloud her name  
 And covered up his eyes for fear and  
 shame.

But through the stillness he her voice  
 could hear  
 Piercing his heart with joy scarce bear-  
 able,  
 That said, "Milanion, wherefore dost  
 thou fear,  
 I am not hard to those who love me well;  
 List to what I a second time will tell,  
 And thou mayest hear perchance, and  
 live to save  
 The cruel maiden from a loveless grave.

"See, by my feet three golden apples lie —  
 Such fruit among the heavy roses falls,  
 Such fruit my watchful damsels carefully  
 Store up within the best loved of my walls,  
 Ancient Damascus, where the lover calls  
 Above my unseen head, and faint and  
 light  
 The rose-leaves flutter round me in the  
 night.

"And note, that these are not alone most  
 fair  
 With heavenly gold, but longing strange  
 they bring  
 Unto the hearts of men, who will not care  
 Beholding these, for any once-loved thing  
 Till round the shining sides their fingers  
 cling.  
 And thou shalt see thy well-girt swift-foot  
 maid  
 By sight of these amidst her glory stayed.

"For bearing these within a scrip with  
 thee,  
 When first she heads thee from the  
 starting-place  
 Cast down the first one for her eyes to see,  
 And when she turns aside make on  
 apace,  
 And if again she heads thee in the race  
 Spare not the other two to cast aside  
 If she not long enough behind will bide.

"Farewell, and when has come the happy  
 time  
 That she Diana's raiment must unbind  
 And all the world seems blessed with  
 Saturn's clime,  
 And thou with eager arms about her  
 twined  
 Beholdest first her gray eyes growing  
 kind,  
 Surely, O trembler, thou shalt scarcely  
 then  
 Forget the Helper of unhappy men."

Milanion raised his head at this last word  
 For now so soft and kind she seemed to be  
 No longer of her Godhead was he feared;  
 Too late he looked; for nothing could he  
 see  
 But the white image glimmering doubt-  
 fully  
 In the departing twilight cold and gray,  
 And those three apples on the step that  
 lay.

These then he caught up quivering with  
 delight,  
 Yet fearful lest it all might be a dream;  
 And though aweary with the watchful  
 night,  
 And sleepless nights of longing, still did  
 deem  
 He could not sleep; but yet the first  
 sunbeam  
 That smote the fane across the heaving  
 deep  
 Shone on him laid in calm, untroubled  
 sleep.

But little ere the noontide did he rise,  
 And why he felt so happy scarce could  
 tell  
 Until the gleaming apples met his eyes.  
 Then leaving the fair place where this  
 befell  
 Oft he looked back as one who loved it  
 well,  
 Then homeward to the haunts of men,  
 'gan wend  
 To bring all things unto a happy end.

Now has the lingering month at last  
 gone by,  
 Again are all folk round the running  
 place,  
 Nor other seems the dismal pageantry

Than heretofore, but that another face  
Looks o'er the smooth course ready for  
the race,  
For now, beheld of all, Milanion  
Stands on the spot he twice has look'd  
upon.

But yet — what change is this that holds  
the maid?

Does she indeed see in his glittering eye  
More than disdain of the sharp shearing  
blade,

Some happy hope of help and victory?  
The others seem'd to say, "We come to  
die;

Look down upon us for a little while,  
That, dead, we may bethink us of thy  
smile."

But he — what look of mastery was this  
He cast on her? why were his lips so red;  
Why was his face so flush'd with happi-  
ness?

So looks not one who deems himself but  
dead,

E'en if to death he bows a willing head;  
So rather looks a god well pleas'd to find  
Some earthly damsel fashion'd to his  
mind.

Why must she drop her lids before his gaze,  
And even as she casts adown her eyes  
Redden to note his eager glance of praise,  
And wish that she were clad in other guise?  
Why must the memory to her heart arise  
Of things unnoticed when they first were  
heard,  
Some lover's song, some answering  
maiden's word?

What makes these longings, vague, with-  
out a name,

And this vain pity never felt before,  
This sudden languor, this contempt of  
fame,

This tender sorrow for the time past o'er,  
These doubts that grow each minute  
more and more?

Why does she tremble as the time grows  
near,

And weak defeat and woeful victory fear?

But while she seem'd to hear her beating  
heart,

Above their heads the trumpet blast rang  
out

And forth they sprang, and she must  
play her part;

Then flew her white feet, knowing not a  
doubt,

Though, slackening once, she turn'd her  
head about,

But then she cried aloud and faster fled  
Than e'er before, and all men deemed  
him dead.

But with no sound he raised aloft his  
hand,

And thence what seemed a ray of light  
there flew

And past the maid rolled on along the  
sand;

Then trembling she her feet together drew  
And in her heart a strong desire there  
grew

To have the toy; some god she thought  
had given

That gift to her, to make of earth a  
heaven.

Then from the course with eager steps  
she ran,

And in her odorous bosom laid the gold.  
But when she turned again, the great-  
limbed man,

Now well ahead she failed not to behold,  
And mindful of her glory waxing cold,  
Sprang up and followed him in hot pur-  
suit,

Though with one hand she touched the  
golden fruit.

Note too, the bow that she was wont to  
bear

She laid aside to grasp the glittering prize,  
And o'er her shoulder from the quiver fair  
Three arrows fell and lay before her eyes  
Unnoticed, as amidst the people's cries  
She sprang to head the strong Milanion,  
Who now the turning-post had well-nigh  
won.

But as he set his mighty hand on it  
White fingers underneath his own were  
laid,

And white limbs from his dazzled eyes  
did flit,

Then he the second fruit cast by the maid  
She ran awhile, and then as one afraid  
Wavered and stopped, and turned and  
made no stay,

Until the globe with its bright fellow lay.

Then, as a troubled glance she cast  
 around,  
 Now far ahead the Argive could she see,  
 And in her garment's hem one hand she  
 wound  
 To keep the double prize, and strenuously  
 Sped o'er the course, and little doubt had  
 she  
 To win the day, though now but scanty  
 space  
 Was left betwixt him and the winning  
 place.

Short was the way unto such winged  
 feet,  
 Quickly she gained upon him till at last  
 He turned about her eager eyes to meet  
 And from his hand the third fair apple  
 cast.  
 She wavered not, but turned and ran so  
 fast  
 After the prize that should her bliss fulfil.  
 That in her hand it lay ere it was still.

Nor did she rest, but turned about to win  
 Once more, an unblest woeful victory —  
 And yet — and yet — why does her  
 breath begin  
 To fail her, and her feet drag heavily?  
 Why fails she now to see if far or nigh  
 The goal is? why do her gray eyes grow  
 dim?  
 Why do these tremors run through every  
 limb?

She spreads her arms abroad some stay to  
 find  
 Else must she fall, indeed, and findeth  
 this,  
 A strong man's arms about her body  
 twined.  
 Nor may she shudder now to feel his  
 kiss,  
 So wrapped she is in new unbroken bliss:  
 Made happy that the foe the prize hath  
 won,  
 She weeps glad tears for all her glory  
 done.

SHATTER the trumpet, hew adown the  
 posts!  
 Upon the brazen altar break the sword,  
 And scatter incense to appease the ghosts  
 Of those who died here by their own  
 award.

Bring forth the image of the mighty  
 Lord,  
 And her who unseen o'er the runners  
 hung,  
 And did a deed for ever to be sung.

Here are the gathered folk; make no  
 delay,  
 Open King Schœneus' well-filled treasury,  
 Bring out the gifts long hid from light  
 of day,  
 The golden bowls o'erwrought with  
 imagery,  
 Gold chains, and unguents brought from  
 over sea,  
 The saffron gown the old Phœnician  
 brought,  
 Within the temple of the Goddess  
 wrought.

O ye, O damsels, who shall never see  
 Her, that Love's servant bringeth now  
 to you,  
 Returning from another victory,  
 In some cool bower do all that now is due!  
 Since she in token of her service new  
 Shall give to Venus offerings rich enow,  
 Her maiden zone, her arrows and her  
 bow. 1868.

#### SONG FROM THE STORY OF CUPID AND PSYCHE

O PENSIVE, tender maid, downcast and  
 shy,  
 Who turnest pale e'en at the name of  
 love,  
 And with flushed face must pass the elm-  
 tree by,  
 Ashamed to hear the passionate gray  
 dove  
 Moan to his mate, thee too the god shall  
 move,  
 Thee too the maidens shall ungird one  
 day,  
 And with thy girdle put thy shame away.

What, then, and shall white winter  
 ne'er be done  
 Because the glittering frosty morn is  
 fair?  
 Because against the early-setting sun  
 Bright show the gilded boughs, though  
 waste and bare?  
 Because the robin singeth free from care?



Ah! these are memories of a better day  
When on earth's face the lips of summer  
lay.

Come, then, beloved one, for such as  
thee  
Love loveth, and their hearts he knoweth  
well,  
Who hoard their moments of felicity,  
As misers hoard the medals that they  
tell,  
Lest on the earth but paupers they should  
dwell:

"We hide our love to bless another  
day;  
The world is hard, youth passes quick,"  
they say.

Ah, little ones, but if ye could forget  
Amidst your outpoured love that you  
must die,  
Then ye, my servants, were death's con-  
querors yet,  
And love to you should be eternity,  
How quick soever might the days go by:  
Yes, ye are made immortal on the day  
Ye cease the dusty grains of time to  
weigh.

Thou harkenest, love? O make no  
semblance then  
That thou art loved, but as thy custom is  
Turn thy gray eyes away from eyes of  
men.  
With hands down-dropped, that tremble  
with thy bliss,  
With hidden eyes, take thy first lover's  
kiss;  
Call this eternity which is to-day,  
Nor dream that this our love can pass  
away. 1868.

### JUNE

O JUNE, O June, that we desired so,  
Wilt thou not make us happy on this  
day?  
Across the river thy soft breezes blow  
Sweet with the scent of beanfields far  
away,  
Above our heads rustle the aspens gray,  
Calm is the sky with harmless clouds  
beset,  
No thought of storm the morning vexes  
yet.

See, we have left our hopes and fears be-  
hind  
To give our very hearts up unto thee;  
What better place than this then could  
we find  
By this sweet stream that knows not of  
the sea,  
That guesses not the city's misery,  
This little stream whose hamlets scarce  
have names,  
This far-off, lonely mother of the  
Thames?

Here then, O June, thy kindness will  
we take;  
And if indeed but pensive men we seem,  
What should we do? thou wouldst not  
have us wake  
From out the arms of this rare happy  
dream  
And wish to leave the murmur of the  
stream,  
The rustling boughs, the twitter of the  
birds,  
And all thy thousand peaceful happy  
words. 1868.

### AUGUST

ACROSS the gap made by our English  
hinds,  
Amidst the Roman's handiwork, behold  
Far off the long-roofed church; the  
shepherd binds  
The withy round the hurdles of his fold,  
Down in the foss the river fed of old,  
That through long lapse of time has  
grown to be  
The little grassy valley that you see.

Rest here awhile, not yet the eve is still,  
The bees are wandering yet, and you  
may hear  
The barley mowers on the trenchèd hill,  
The sheep-bells, and the restless changing  
weir,  
All little sounds made musical and clear  
Beneath the sky that burning August  
gives,  
While yet the thought of glorious Summer  
lives.

Ah, love! such happy days, such days as  
these,  
Must we still waste them, craving for  
the best,

Like lovers o'er the painted images  
Of those who once their yearning hearts  
have blessed?

Have we been happy on our day of rest?  
Thine eyes say "yes," — but if it came  
again,

Perchance its ending would not seem so  
vain. 1868.

### SONG FROM OGIER THE DANE

HÆC

IN the white-flowered hawthorn brake,  
Love, be merry for my sake;  
Twine the blossoms in my hair,  
Kiss me where I am most fair —  
Kiss me, love! for who knoweth  
What thing cometh after death?

ILLE

Nay, the garlanded gold hair  
Hides thee where thou art most fair;  
Hides the rose-tinged hills of snow —  
Ah, sweet love, I have thee now!  
Kiss me, love! for who knoweth  
What thing cometh after death?

HÆC

Shall we weep for a dead day,  
Or set Sorrow in our way?  
Hidden by my golden hair,  
Wilt thou weep that sweet days wear?  
Kiss me, love! for who knoweth  
What thing cometh after death?

ILLE

Weep, O Love, the days that flit,  
Now, while I can feel thy breath;  
Then may I remember it  
Sad and old, and near my death.  
Kiss me, love! for who knoweth  
What thing cometh after death? 1868.

### SONG FROM THE STORY OF ACON- TIUS AND CYDIPPE

FAIR is the night and fair the day,  
Now April is forgot of May,  
Now into June May falls away;  
Fair day, fair night, O give me back  
The tide that all fair things did lack  
Except my love, except my sweet!

Blow back, O wind! thou art not kind,  
Though thou art sweet; thou hast no  
mind

Her hair about my sweet to wind;  
O flowery sward, though thou art bright,  
I praise thee not for thy delight,  
Thou hast not kissed her silver feet.

Thou know'st her not, O rustling tree,  
What dost thou then to shadow me,  
Whose shade her breast did never see?  
O flowers, in vain ye bow adown!  
Ye have not felt her odorous gown  
Brush past your heads my lips to meet.

Flow on, great river — thou mayst deem  
That far away, a summer stream,  
Thou sawest her limbs amidst thee gleam  
And kissed her foot, and kissed her knee,  
Yet get thee swift unto the sea!  
With nought of true thou wilt me greet.

And thou that men call by my name,  
O helpless one, hast thou no shame  
That thou must even look the same,  
As while ago, as while ago,  
When thou and she were left alone,  
And hands, and lips, and tears did meet?

Grow weak and pine, lie down to die,  
O body in thy misery,  
Because short time and sweet goes by;  
O foolish heart, how weak thou art!  
Break, break, because thou needs must  
part  
From thine own love, from thine own  
sweet! 1870.

### L'ENVOI

#### THE EARTHLY PARADISE

HERE are we for the last time face to face,  
Thou and I, Book, before I bid thee speed  
Upon thy perilous journey to that place  
For which I have done on thee pilgrim's  
weed,  
Striving to get thee all things for thy  
need —  
— I love thee, whatso time or men may  
say  
Of the poor singer of an empty day.

Good reason why I love thee, e'en if thou  
Be mocked or clean forgot as time wears  
on;

For ever as thy fashioning did grow,  
 Kind word and praise because of thee I won  
 From those without whom were my  
     world all gone,  
 My hope fallen dead, my singing cast  
     away,  
 And I set soothly in an empty day.

I love thee; yet this last time must it be  
 That thou must hold thy peace and I must  
     speak,  
 Lest if thou babble I begin to see  
 Thy gear too thin, thy limbs and heart  
     too weak,  
 To find the land thou goest forth to seek —  
 — Though what harm if thou die upon the  
     way,  
 Thou idle singer of an empty day?

But though this land desired thou never  
     reach,  
 Yet folk who know it mayst thou meet,  
     or death;  
 Therefore a word unto thee would I teach  
 To answer these, who, noting thy weak  
     breath,  
 Thy wandering eyes, thy heart of little  
     faith,  
 May make thy fond desire a sport and  
     play  
 Mocking the singer of an empty day.

That land's name, say'st thou? and the  
     road thereto?  
 Nay, Book, thou mockest, saying thou  
     know'st it not;  
 Surely no book of verse I ever knew  
 But ever was the heart within him hot  
 To gain the Land of Matters Unforgot —  
 — There, now we both laugh — as the  
     whole world may,  
 At us poor singers of an empty day.

Nay, let it pass, and harken! Hast thou  
     heard  
 That therein I believe I have a friend,  
 Of whom for love I may not be afear'd?  
 It is to him indeed I bid thee wend;  
 Yea, he perchance may meet thee ere  
     thou end,  
 Dying so far off from the hedge of bay,  
 Thou idle singer of an empty day!

Well, think of him, I bid thee, on the  
     road,  
 And if it hap that midst of thy defeat,

Fainting beneath thy follies' heavy load,  
 My Master, GEOFFREY CHAUCER, thou  
     do meet,  
 Then shalt thou win a space of rest full  
     sweet;  
 Then be thou bold, and speak the words  
     I say,  
 The idle singer of an empty day!

"O Master, O thou great of heart and  
     tongue,  
 Thou well mayst ask me why I wander  
     here,  
 In raiment rent of stories oft besung!  
 But of thy gentleness draw thou anear,  
 And then the heart of one who held thee  
     dear  
 Mayst thou behold! So near as that I lay  
 Unto the singer of an empty day.

"For this he ever said, who sent me  
     forth  
 To seek a place amid thy company;  
 That howsoever little was my worth,  
 Yet was he worth e'en just so much as I;  
 He said that rhyme hath little skill to  
     lie;  
 Nor feigned to cast his worser part away;  
 In idle singing for an empty day.

"I have beheld him tremble oft enough  
 At things he could not choose but trust  
     to me,  
 Although he knew the world was wise  
     and rough;  
 And never did he fail to let me see  
 His love, — his folly and faithlessness,  
     maybe;  
 And still in turn I gave him voice to pray  
 Such prayers as cling about an empty  
     day.

"Thou, keen-eyed, reading me, mayst  
     read him through,  
 For surely little is there left behind;  
 No power great deeds unnameable to do;  
 No knowledge for which words he may  
     not find,  
 No love of things as vague as autumn  
     wind —  
 — Earth of the earth lies hidden by my  
     clay,  
 The idle singer of an empty day!

"Children we twain are, saith he, late  
     made wise

In love, but in all else most childish still,  
 And seeking still the pleasure of our eyes,  
 And what our ears with sweetest sounds  
     may fill;  
 Not fearing Love, lest these things he  
     should kill;  
 Howe'er his pain by pleasure doth he lay,  
 Making a strange tale of an empty day.

"Death have we hated, knowing not  
     what it meant;  
 Life have we loved, through green leaf  
     and through sere,  
 Though still the less we knew of its intent;  
 The Earth and Heaven through countless  
     year on year,  
 Slow changing, were to us but curtains  
     fair,  
 Hung round about a little room, where  
     play  
 Weeping and laughter of man's empty  
     day.

"O Master, if thine heart could love us  
     yet,  
 Spite of things left undone, and wrongly  
     done,  
 Some place in loving hearts then should  
     we get,  
 For thou, sweet-souled, didst never  
     stand alone,  
 But knew'st the joy and woe of many an  
     one —  
 — By lovers dead, who live through thee,  
     we pray,  
 Help thou us singers of an empty day!"

Fearest thou, Book, what answer thou  
     mayst gain  
 Lest he should scorn thee, and thereof  
     thou die?  
 Nay, it shall not be. — Thou mayst toil in  
     vain,  
 And never draw the House of Fame  
     anigh;  
 Yet he and his shall know whereof we  
     cry,  
 Shall all it not ill done to strive to lay  
 The ghosts that crowd about life's empty  
     day.

Then let the others go! and if indeed  
 In some old garden thou and I have  
     wrought,  
 And made fresh flowers spring up from  
     hoarded seed,

And fragrance of old days and deeds have  
     brought  
 Back to folk weary; all was not for  
     nought.  
 — No little part it was for me to play —  
 The idle singer of an empty day. 1870.

## THE SEASONS

*Spring.* Spring am I, too soft of heart  
 Much to speak ere I depart:  
 Ask the Summer-tide to prove  
 The abundance of my love.

*Summer.* Summer looked for long am I;  
 Much shall change or e'er I die  
 Prithee take it not amiss  
 Though I weary thee with bliss.

*Autumn.* Laden Autumn here I stand  
 Worn of heart, and weak of hand:  
 Nought but rest seems good to me,  
 Speak the word that sets me free.

*Winter.* I am Winter, that do keep  
 Longing safe amidst of sleep:  
 Who shall say if I were dead  
 What should be remembered?

1871.

## ERROR AND LOSS<sup>1</sup>

UPON an eve I sat me down and wept,  
 Because the world to me seemed nowise  
     good;  
 Still autumn was it, and the meadows  
     slept,  
 The misty hills dreamed, and the silent  
     wood  
 Seemed listening to the sorrow of my  
     mood:  
 I knew not if the earth with me did  
     grieve,  
 Or if it mock'd my grief that bitter eve.

Then 'twixt my tears a maiden did I see  
 Who drew anigh me on the leaf-strewn  
     grass,  
 Then stood and gazed upon me pitifully  
 With grief-worn eyes, until my woe did  
     pass

From me to her, and tearless now I was,  
 And she mid tears was asking me of one  
 She long had sought unaided and alone.

<sup>1</sup> Originally with the title "The Dark Wood."

I knew not of him, and she turned away  
 Into the dark wood, and my own great  
 pain  
 Still held me there, till dark had slain the  
 day,  
 And perished at the gray dawn's hand  
 again;  
 Then from the wood a voice cried: "Ah,  
 in vain,  
 In vain I seek thee, O thou bitter-sweet!  
 In what lone land are set thy longed-for  
 feet?"

Then I looked up, and lo, a man there  
 came  
 From midst the trees, and stood regarding  
 me  
 Until my tears were dried for very shame;  
 Then he cried out: "O mourner, where is  
 she  
 Whom I have sought o'er every land and  
 sea?  
 I love her and she loveth me, and still  
 We meet no more than green hill meeteth  
 hill."

With that he passed on sadly, and I knew  
 That these had met and missed in the  
 dark night,  
 Blinded by blindness of the world untrue,  
 That hideth love and maketh wrong of  
 right.  
 Then midst my pity for their lost delight,  
 Yet more with barren longing I grew weak,  
 Yet more I mourned that I had none to  
 seek. 1871.

## THE DAY OF LOVE

### FROM LOVE IS ENOUGH

DAWN talks to Day  
 Over dew-gleaming flowers,  
 Night flies away  
 Till the resting of hours:  
 Fresh are thy feet  
 And with dreams thine eyes glis-  
 tening,  
 Thy still lips are sweet  
 Though the world is a-listening.  
 O Love, set a word in my mouth for our  
 meeting,  
 Cast thine arms round about me to stay  
 my heart's beating!  
 O fresh day, O fair day, O long day  
 made ours!

Morn shall meet noon  
 While the flower-stems yet move,  
 Though the wind dieth soon  
 And the clouds fade above,  
 Loved lips are thine  
 As I tremble and harken;  
 Bright thine eyes shine,  
 Though the leaves thy brow darken.  
 O Love, kiss me into silence, lest no word  
 avail me,  
 Stay my head with thy bosom lest breath  
 and life fail me!  
 O sweet day, O rich day, made long for  
 our love!

Late day shall greet eve,  
 And the full blossoms shake,  
 For the wind will not leave  
 The tall trees while they wake.  
 Eyes soft with bliss,  
 Come nigher and nigher!  
 Sweet mouth I kiss,  
 Tell me all thy desire!  
 Let us speak, love, together some words  
 of our story,  
 That our lips as they part may remember  
 the glory!  
 O soft day, O calm day, made clear for  
 our sake!

Eve shall kiss night,  
 And the leaves stir like rain  
 As the wind stealeth light  
 O'er the grass of the plain.  
 Unseen are thine eyes  
 Mid the dreamy night's sleeping,  
 And on my mouth there lies  
 The dear rain of thy weeping.  
 Hold, silence, love, speak not of the sweet  
 day departed,  
 Cling close to me, love, lest I waken sad-  
 hearted!  
 O kind day, O dear day, short day,  
 come again! 1873.

## FINAL CHORUS

### FROM LOVE IS ENOUGH

LOVE is enough: ho ye who seek saving,  
 Go no further; come hither; there  
 have been who have found it,  
 And these know the House of Fulfilment  
 of Craving;  
 These know the Cup with the roses  
 around it.



These know the World's Wound and  
the balm that hath bound it :  
Cry out, the World heedeth not, "Love,  
lead us home !"

He leadeth, He harkeneth, He cometh to  
you-ward ;  
Set your faces as steel to the fears that  
assemble

Round his goad for the faint, and his  
scourge for the froward :

Lo his lips, how with tales of last kisses  
they tremble !

Lo his eyes of all sorrow that may not  
dissemble !

Cry out, for he heedeth, "O Love, lead us  
home !"

O harken the words of his voice of com-  
passion :

"Come cling round about me, ye faith-  
ful who sicken

Of the weary unrest and the world's pass-  
ing fashion !

As the rain in mid-morning your  
troubles shall thicken,

But surely within you some Godhead  
doth quicken,

As ye cry to me heeding, and leading  
you home.

"Come — pain ye shall have, and be blind  
to the ending !

Come — fear ye shall have, mid the  
sky's overcasting !

Come — change ye shall have, for far  
are ye wending !

Come — no crown ye shall have for  
your thirst and your fasting,

But the kissed lips of Love and fair life  
everlasting !

Cry out, for one heedeth, who leadeth you  
home !"

Is he gone? was he with us? — ho ye  
who seek saving,

Go no further ; come hither ; for have  
we not found it ?

Here is the House of Fulfilment of Crav-  
ing ;

Here is the Cup with the roses around  
it ;

The World's Wound well healed, and  
the balm that hath bound it :

Cry out ! for he heedeth, fair Love that  
led home.

1873.

## THE VOICE OF TOIL

I HEARD men saying, Leave hope and  
praying,  
All days shall be as all have been ;  
To-day and to-morrow bring fear and  
sorrow,  
The never ending toil between.

When Earth was younger mid toil and  
hunger,  
In hope we strove, and our hands were  
strong ;  
Then great men led us, with words they  
fed us,  
And bade us right the earthly wrong.

Go read in story their deeds and glory,  
Their names amidst the nameless dead ;  
Turn then from lying to us slow-dying  
In that good world to which they led ;

Where fast and faster our iron master,  
The thing we made, for ever drives,  
Bids us grind treasure and fashion pleas-  
ure  
For other hopes and other lives.

Where home is a hovel and dull we  
grovel,  
Forgetting that the world is fair ;  
Where no babe we cherish, lest its very  
soul perish ;  
Where mirth is crime, and love a snare.

Who now shall lead us, what god shall  
heed us  
As we lie in the hell our hands have  
won ?  
For us are no rulers but fools and be-  
foolers,  
The great are fallen, the wise men gone.

I heard men saying, Leave tears and  
praying,  
The sharp knife heedeth not the sheep ;  
Are we not stronger than the rich and the  
wronger,  
When day breaks over dreams and sleep !

Come, shoulder to shoulder, ere the world  
grows older !  
Help lies in nought but thee and me ;  
Hope is before us, the long years that bore  
us  
Bore leaders more than men may be.

Let dead hearts tarry and trade and  
 marry,  
 And trembling nurse their dreams of  
 mirth,  
 While we the living our lives are giving  
 To bring the bright new world to birth.

Come, shoulder to shoulder, ere earth  
 grows older!

The cause spreads over land and sea;  
 Now the world shaketh, and fear awaketh,  
 And joy at last for thee and me.

1884.

## NO MASTER

SAITH man to man, We've heard and  
 known

That we no master need  
 To live upon this earth our own,  
 In fair and manly deed.

The grief of slaves long passed away  
 For us hath forged the chain,  
 Till now each worker's patient day  
 Builds up the House of Pain.

And we, shall we too, crouch and quail,  
 Ashamed, afraid of strife,  
 And lest our lives untimely fail  
 Embrace the Death in Life?  
 Nay, cry aloud, and have no fear,  
 We few against the world;  
 Awake, arise! the hope we bear  
 Against the curse is hurled.

It grows and grows — are we the same,  
 The feeble band, the few?

Or what are these with eyes aflame,  
 And hands to deal and do?

This is the host that bears the word,  
 "NO MASTER HIGH OR LOW" —

A lightning flame, a shearing sword,  
 A storm to overthrow. 1884.

## THE DAY IS COMING

COME hither, lads, and harken, for a tale  
 there is to tell,  
 Of the wonderful days a-coming, when  
 all shall be better than well.

And the tale shall be told of a country, a  
 land in the midst of the sea,  
 And folk shall call it England in the days  
 that are going to be.

There more than one in a thousand in the  
 days that are yet to come,  
 Shall have some hope of the morrow,  
 some joy of the ancient home.

For then, laugh not, but listen to this  
 strange tale of mine,  
 All folk that are in England shall be  
 better lodged than swine.

Then a man shall work and bethink him,  
 and rejoice in the deeds of his  
 hand,

Nor yet come home in the even too faint  
 and weary to stand.

Men in that time a-coming shall work and  
 have no fear  
 For to-morrow's lack of earning and the  
 hunger-wolf anear.

I tell you this for a wonder, that no man  
 then shall be glad  
 Of his fellow's fall and mishap to snatch  
 at the work he had.

For that which the worker winneth shall  
 then be his indeed,  
 Nor shall half be reaped for nothing by  
 him that sowed no seed.

O strange new wonderful justice! But  
 for whom shall we gather the  
 gain?

For ourselves and for each of our fellows,  
 and no hand shall labor in vain.

Then all Mine and all Thine shall be Ours,  
 and no more shall any man crave  
 For riches that serve for nothing but to  
 fetter a friend for a slave.

And what wealth then shall be left us  
 when none shall gather gold  
 To buy his friend in the market, and  
 pinch and pine the sold?

Nay, what save the lovely city, and the  
 little house on the hill,  
 And the wastes and the woodland beauty,  
 and the happy fields we till;

And the homes of ancient stories, the  
 tombs of the mighty dead;  
 And the wise men seeking out marvels,  
 and the poet's teeming head;

And the painter's hand of wonder; and  
the marvelous fiddle-bow,  
And that banded choirs of music: all  
those that do and know.

For all these shall be ours and all men's;  
nor shall any lack a share  
Of the toil and the gain of living in the  
days when the world grows fair.

Ah! such are days that shall be! But  
what are the deeds of to-day,  
In the days of the years we dwell in, that  
wear our lives away?

Why, then, and for what are we waiting?  
There are three words to speak;  
WE WILL IT, and what is the foeman but  
the dream-strong wakened and  
weak?

O why and for what are we waiting?  
while our brothers droop and die,  
And on every wind of the heavens a  
wasted life goes by.

How long shall they reproach us where  
crowd on crowd they dwell,  
Poor ghosts of the wicked city, the gold-  
crushed, hungry hell?

Through squalid life they labored, in  
sordid grief they died,  
Those sons of a mighty mother, those  
props of England's pride.

They are gone; there is none can undo  
it, nor save our souls from the  
curse;

But many a million cometh, and shall  
they be better or worse?

It is we must answer and hasten, and  
open wide the door  
For the rich man's hurrying terror, and  
the slow-foot hope of the poor.

Yea, the voiceless wrath of the wretched,  
and their unlearned discontent,  
We must give it voice and wisdom till  
the waiting-tide be spent.

Come, then, since all things call us, the  
living and the dead,  
And o'er the weltering tangle a glimmer-  
ing light is shed,

Come, then, let us cast off fooling, and  
put by ease and rest,  
For the Cause alone is worthy till the  
good days bring the best.

Come, join in the only battle wherein no  
man can fail,  
Where whoso fadeth and dieth, yet his  
deed shall still prevail.

Ah! come, cast off all fooling, for this,  
at least, we know:  
That the Dawn and the Day is coming  
and forth the Banners go. 1885.

### THE DAYS THAT WERE

(MOTTO OF THE HOUSE OF THE WOLFINGS)

WHILES in the early winter eve  
We pass amid the gathering night  
Some homestead that we had to leave  
Years past; and see its candles bright  
Shine in the room beside the door  
Where we were merry years ago,  
But now must never enter more,  
As still the dark road drives us on.  
E'en so the world of men may turn  
At even of some hurried day  
And see the ancient glimmer burn  
Across the waste that hath no way;  
Then, with that faint light in its eyes,  
And awhile I bid it linger near  
And nurse in waving memories  
The bitter sweet of days that were.  
1880.

### THE DAY OF DAYS

EACH eve earth falleth down the dark,  
As though its hope were o'er;  
Yet lurks the sun when day is done  
Behind to-morrow's door.

Gray grows the dawn while men-folk  
sleep,  
Unseen spreads on the light,  
Till the thrush sings to the colored things,  
And earth forgets the night.

No otherwise wends on our Hope:  
E'en as a tale that's told  
Are fair lives lost, and all the cost  
Of wise and true and bold.

We've toiled and failed; we spake the  
word;  
None harkened; dumb we lie;  
Our Hope is dead, the seed we spread  
Fell o'er the earth to die.

What's this? For joy our hearts stand  
still,  
And life is loved and dear,  
The lost and found the Cause hath  
crowned,  
The Day of Days is here. 1890.

### THE BURGHERS' BATTLE

THICK rise the spear-shafts o'er the land  
That erst the harvest bore;  
The sword is heavy in the hand,  
*And we return no more.*  
The light wind waves the Ruddy Fox,  
Our banner of the war,  
And ripples in the Running Ox,  
*And we return no more.*  
Across our stubble acres now  
The teams go four and four;  
But out-worn elders guide the plough,  
*And we return no more.*  
And now the women heavy-eyed  
Turn through the open door  
From gazing down the highway wide,  
*Where we return no more.*  
The shadows of the fruited close  
Dapple the feast-hall floor;  
There lie our dogs and dream and doze,  
*And we return no more.*  
Down from the minster tower to-day  
Fall the soft chimes of yore  
Amidst the chattering jackdaws' play:  
*And we return no more.*  
But underneath the streets are still;  
Noon, and the market's o'er!  
Back go the goodwives o'er the hill;  
*For we return no more.*  
What merchant to our gates shall come?  
What wise man bring us lore?  
What abbot ride away to Rome,  
*Now we return no more?*  
What mayor shall rule the hall we built?  
Whose scarlet sweep the floor?  
What judge shall doom the robber's guilt,  
*Now we return no more?*  
New houses in the streets shall rise  
Where builded we before,  
Of other stone wrought otherwise;  
*For we return no more.*

And crops shall cover field and hill  
Unlike what once they bore,  
And all be done without our will,  
*Now we return no more.*  
Look up! the arrows streak the sky,  
The horns of battle roar;  
The long spears lower and draw nigh,  
*And we return no more.*  
Remember how beside the wain,  
We spoke the word of war,  
And sowed this harvest of the plain,  
*And we return no more.*  
Lay spears about the Ruddy Fox!  
The days of old are o'er;  
Heave sword about the Running Ox!  
*For we return no more.* 1891.

### AGNES AND THE HILL-MAN

TRANSLATED FROM THE DANISH

AGNES went through the meadows a-weep-  
ing,  
*Fowl are a-singing.*  
There stood the hill-man heed thereof  
keeping.  
*Agnes, fair Agnes!*  
"Come to the hill, fair Agnes, with me,  
The reddest of gold will I give unto thee!"  
Twice went Agnes the hill round about,  
Then wended within, left the fair world  
without.

In the hillside bode Agnes, three years  
thrice told o'er,  
For the green earth sithence fell she long-  
ing full sore.

There she sat, and lullaby sang in her  
singing,  
And she heard how the bells of England  
were ringing.

Agnes before her true-love did stand:  
"May I wend to the church of the English  
Land?"

"To England's Church well mayst thou  
be gone,  
So that no hand thou lay the red gold  
upon.

"So that when thou art come the church-  
yard anear  
Thou cast not abroad thy golden hair.

"So that when thou standest the church  
within  
To thy mother on bench thou never win.

"So that when thou hearest the high  
God's name,  
No knee unto earth thou bow to the  
same."

Hand she laid on all gold that was there,  
And cast abroad her golden hair.

And when the church she stood within  
To her mother on bench straight'did she  
win.

And when she heard the high God's name,  
Knee unto earth she bowed to the same.

When all the mass was sung to its end  
Home with her mother dead did she wend.

"Come, Agnes, into the hillside to me,  
For thy seven small sons greet sorely for  
thee!"

"Let them greet, let them greet, as they  
will have to do;  
For never again will I hearken thereto!"

Weird laid he on her, sore sickness he  
wrought,

*Fowl are a-singing.*

That self-same hour to death was she  
brought.

*Agnes, fair Agnes.*

1891.

#### ICELAND FIRST SEEN

Lo from our loitering ship a new land at  
last to be seen;

Toothed rocks down the side of the firth  
on the east guard a weary wide lea,

And black slope the hill-sides above,  
striped adown with their desolate  
green:

And a peak rises up on the west from the  
meeting of cloud and of sea,

Foursquare from base unto point like the  
building of Gods that have been,

The last of that waste of the mountains all  
cloud-wreathed and snow-flecked and  
gray,

And bright with the dawn that began just  
now at the ending of day.

Ah! what came forth for to see that our  
hearts are so hot with desire?  
Is it enough for our rest the sight of this  
desolate strand,  
And the mountain-waste voiceless as  
death but for winds that may sleep not  
nor tire?

Why do we long to wend forth through the  
length and breadth of a land,  
Dreadful with grinding of ice, and record  
of scarce hidden fire,  
But that there 'mid the gray grassy dales  
sore scarred by the ruining streams  
Lives the tale of the Northland of old and  
the undying glory of dreams?

O land, as some cave by the sea where the  
treasures of old have been laid,  
The sword it may be of a king whose  
name was the turning of fight;  
Or the staff of some wise of the world that  
many things made and unmade.  
Or the ring of a woman maybe whose  
woe is grown wealth and delight.  
No wheat and no wine grows above it, no  
orchard for blossom and shade;  
The few ships that sail by its blackness  
but deem it the mouth of a grave;  
Yet sure when the world shall awaken,  
this too shall be mighty to save.

O rather, O land, if a marvel it seemeth  
that men ever sought  
Thy wastes for a field and a garden ful-  
filled of all wonder and doubt,  
And feasted amidst of the winter when  
the fight of the year had been fought,  
Whose plunder all gathered together was  
little to babble about:

Cry aloud from thy wastes, O thou land,  
"Not for this nor for that was I  
wrought

Amid waning of realms and of riches and  
death of things worshipped and sure,  
I abide here the spouse of a God, and I  
made and I make and endure."

O Queen of the grief without knowledge,  
of the courage that may not avail,  
Of the longing that may not attain, of the  
love that shall never forget,  
More joy than the gladness of laughter  
thy voice hath amidst of its wail:  
More hope than of pleasure fulfilled  
amidst of thy blindness is set;



More glorious than gaining of all, thine  
 unfaltering hand that shall fail :  
 For what is the mark on thy brow but  
 the brand that thy Brynhild doth bear?  
 Lone once, and loved and undone by a  
 love that no ages outwear.

Ah! when thy Balder comes back, and  
 bears from the heart of the Sun,  
 Peace and the healing of pain, and the  
 wisdom that waiteth no more;  
 And the lilies are laid on thy brow 'mid the  
 crown of the deeds thou hast done;  
 And the roses spring up by thy feet that  
 the rocks of the wilderness wore.

Ah! when thy Balder comes back and we  
 gather the gains he hath won,  
 Shall we not linger a little to talk of thy  
 sweetness of old,

Yea, turn back awhile to thy travail  
 whence the gods stood aloof to behold?

1891.

## TO THE MUSE OF THE NORTH

O MUSE that swayest the sad Northern  
 Song,  
 Thy right hand full of smiting and of  
 wrong,  
 Thy left hand holding pity; and thy  
 breast  
 Heaving with hope of that so certain rest :  
 Thou, with the gray eyes kind and un-  
 afraid,  
 The soft lips trembling not, though they  
 have said  
 The doom of the World and those that  
 dwell therein.  
 The lips that smile not though thy chil-  
 dren win

The fated Love that draws the fated  
 Death.

O, borne adown the fresh stream of thy  
 breath,

Let some word reach my ears and touch  
 my heart,

That, if it may be, I may have a part  
 In that great sorrow of thy children dead  
 That vexed the brow, and bowed adown  
 the head,

Whitened the hair, made life a wondrous  
 dream,

And death the murmur of a restful stream,  
 But left no stain upon those souls of thine  
 Whose greatness through the tangled  
 world doth shine.

O Mother, and Love and Sister all in one,  
 Come thou; for sure I am enough alone  
 That thou thine arms about my heart  
 shouldst throw,

And wrap me in the grief of long ago.

1891.

## DRAWING NEAR THE LIGHT

Lo, when we wade the tangled wood,  
 In haste and hurry to be there,  
 Nought seem its leaves and blossoms good,  
 For all that they be fashioned fair.

But looking up, at last we see  
 The glimmer of the open light,  
 From o'er the place where we would be;  
 Then grow the very brambles bright.

So now, amidst our day of strife,  
 With many a matter glad we play,  
 When once we see the light of life  
 Gleam through the tangle of to-day.

1891.

# SWINBURNE

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## SWINBURNE

### A SONG IN TIME OF ORDER

1852

PUSH hard across the sand,  
For the salt wind gathers breath;  
Shoulder and wrist and hand,  
Push hard as the push of death.

The wind is as iron that rings,  
The foam-heads loosen and flee;  
It swells and welters and swings,  
The pause of the tide of the sea.

And up on the yellow cliff  
The long corn flickers and shakes;  
Push, for the wind holds stiff,  
And the gunwale dips and rakes.

Good hap to the fresh fierce weather,  
The quiver and beat of the sea!  
While three men hold together  
The kingdoms are less by three.

Out to the sea with her there,  
Out with her over the sand,  
Let the kings keep the earth for their  
share!  
We have done with the sharers of  
land.

They have tied the world in a tether,  
They have bought over God with a  
fee;  
While three men hold together,  
The kingdoms are less by three.

We have done with the kisses that sting,  
The thief's mouth red from the feast,  
The blood on the hands of the king,  
And the lie at the lips of the priest.

Will they tie the winds in a tether,  
Put a bit in the jaws of the sea?  
While three men hold together,  
The kingdoms are less by three.

Let our flag run out straight in the wind!  
The old red shall be floated again  
When the ranks that are thin shall be  
thinned,  
When the names that were twenty  
are ten;

When the devil's riddle i mastered  
And the galley-bench creaks with a  
Pope,  
We shall see Buonaparte the bastard  
Kick heels with his throat in a rope.

While the shepherd sets wolves on his sheep  
And the emperor halts his kine,  
While Shame is a watchman asleep  
And Faith is a keeper of swine.

Let the wind shake our flag like a feather,  
Like the plumes of the foam of the sea!  
While three men hold together,  
The kingdoms are less by three.

All the world has its burdens to bear,  
From Cayenne to the Austrian whips;  
Forth, with the rain in our hair  
And the salt sweet foam in our lips:

In the teeth of the hard glad weather,  
In the blown wet face of the sea;  
While three men hold together,  
The kingdoms are less by three.

1862.

### CHORUSES FROM ATALANTA IN CALYDON

#### THE YOUTH OF THE YEAR

WHEN the hounds of spring are on  
winter's traces,  
The mother of months in meadow or  
plain  
Fills the shadows and windy places  
With lisp of leaves and ripple of rain;

And the brown bright nightingale amorous

Is half assuaged for Itylus,  
For the Thracian ships and the foreign  
faces,

The tongueless vigil, and all the pain.

Come with bows bent and with emptying  
of quivers,

Maiden most perfect, lady of light,  
With a noise of winds and many rivers,  
With a clamor of waters, and with  
might;

Bind on thy sandals, O thou most fleet,  
Over the splendor and speed of thy feet;  
For the faint east quickens, the wan west  
shivers,

Round the feet of the day and the feet  
of the night.

Where shall we find her, how shall we  
sing to her,

Fold our hands round her knees, and  
cling?

O that man's heart were as fire and could  
spring her,

Fire, or the strength of the streams that  
spring!

For the stars and the winds are unto  
her

As raiment, as songs of the harp-player;  
For the risen stars and the fallen cling  
to her,

And the southwest-wind and the west-  
wind sing.

For winter's rains and ruins are over,  
And all the season of snows and sins;

The days dividing lover and lover,  
The light that loses, the night that  
wins;

And time remembered is grief forgotten,  
And frosts are slain and flowers begotten,  
And in green underwood and cover

Blossom by blossom the spring begins.

The full streams feed on flower of rushes,  
Ripe grasses trammel a travelling foot,  
The faint fresh flame of the young year  
flushes

From leaf to flower and flower to fruit;  
And fruit and leaf are as gold and fire,  
And the oat is heard above the lyre,  
And the hooféd heel of a satyr crushes

The chestnut-husk at the chestnut  
root.

And Pan by noon and Bacchus by night,  
Fleeter of foot than the fleet-foot kid,  
Follows with dancing and fills with de-  
light

The Mænad and the Bassarid;  
And soft as lips that laugh and hide  
The laughing leaves of the trees divide,  
And screen from seeing and leave in  
sight

The god pursuing, the maiden hid.

The ivy falls with the Bacchanal's hair  
Over her eyebrows hiding her eyes;  
The wild vine slipping down leaves bare  
Her bright breast shortening into sighs;  
The wild vine slips with the weight of its  
leaves,

But the berried ivy catches and cleaves  
To the limbs that litter, the feet that  
scare

The wolf that follows, the fawn that  
flies.

#### THE LIFE OF MAN

BEFORE the beginning of years,  
There came to the making of man  
Time, with a gift of tears;  
Grief, with a glass that ran;  
Pleasure, with pain for leaven;  
Summer, with flowers that fell;  
Remembrance fallen from heaven,  
And madness risen from hell;  
Strength without hands to smite;  
Love that endures for a breath;  
Night, the shadow of light,  
And life, the shadow of death.

And the high gods took in hand  
Fire, and the falling of tears,  
And a measure of sliding sand  
From under the feet of the years;  
And froth and drift of the sea;  
And dust of the laboring earth;  
And bodies of things to be  
In the houses of death and of birth;  
And wrought with weeping and laughter  
And fashioned with loathing and love,  
With life before and after  
And death beneath and above,  
For a day and a night and a morrow,  
That his strength might endure for a  
span  
With travail and heavy sorrow,  
The holy spirit of man.



From the winds of the north and the south

They gathered as unto strife;  
 They breathed upon his mouth,  
 They filled his body with life;  
 Eyesight and speech they wrought  
 For the veils of the soul therein,  
 A time for labor and thought,  
 A time to serve and to sin;  
 They gave him light in his ways,  
 And love, and a space for delight,  
 And beauty and length of days,  
 And night, and sleep in the night.  
 His speech is a burning fire;  
 With his lips he travaileth;  
 In his heart is a blind desire,  
 In his eyes foreknowledge of death;  
 He weaves, and is clothed with derision;  
 Sows, and he shall not reap;  
 His life is a watch or a vision.  
 Between a sleep and a sleep.

#### LOVE AND LOVE'S MATES

WE have seen thee, O Love, thou art fair;  
 thou art goodly, O Love;  
 Thy wings make light in the air as the wings of a dove.  
 Thy feet are as winds that divide the stream of the sea;  
 Earth is thy covering to hide thee, the garment of thee.  
 Thou art swift and subtle and blind as a flame of fire;  
 Before thee the laughter, behind thee the tears of desire;  
 And twain go forth beside thee, a man with a maid;  
 Her eyes are the eyes of a bride whom delight makes afraid;  
 As the breath in the buds that stir is her bridal breath:  
 But Fate is the name of her; and his name is Death.

#### NATURE

O THAT I now, I too were  
 By deep wells and water-floods,  
 Streams of ancient hills, and where  
 All the wan green places bear  
 Blossoms cleaving to the sod,  
 Fruitless fruit, and grasses fair,  
 Or such darkest ivy-buds  
 As divide thy yellow hair,  
 Bacchus, and their leaves that nod

Round thy fawnskin brush the bare  
 Snow-soft shoulders of a god;  
 There the year is sweet, and there  
 Earth is full of secret springs,  
 And the fervent rose-cheeked hours,  
 Those that marry dawn and noon,  
 There are sunless, there look pale  
 In dim leaves and hidden air,  
 Pale as grass or latter flowers,  
 Or the wild vine's wan wet rings  
 Full of dew beneath the moon,  
 And all day the nightingale  
 Sleeps, and all night sings;  
 There in cold remote recesses  
 That nor alien eyes assail,  
 Feet, nor imminence of wings,  
 Nor a wind nor any tune,  
 Thou, O queen and holiest,  
 Flower the whitest of all things,  
 With reluctant lengthening tresses  
 And with sudden splendid breast  
 Save of maidens un beholden,  
 There art wont to enter, there  
 Thy divine swift limbs and golden  
 Maiden growth of unbound hair,  
 Bathed in waters white,  
 Shine, and many a maid's by thee  
 In moist woodland or the hilly  
 Flowerless brakes where wells abound  
 Out of all men's sight;  
 Or in lower pools that see  
 All their marges clothed all round  
 With the innumerable lily,  
 Whence the golden-girdled bee  
 Flits through flowering rush to fret  
 White or duskier violet,  
 Fair as those that in far years  
 With their buds left luminous  
 And their little leaves made wet  
 From the warmer dew of tears,  
 Mother's tears in extreme need,  
 Hid the limbs of Iamus,  
 Of thy brother's seed;  
 For his heart was piteous  
 Toward him, even as thine heart now  
 Pitiful toward us;  
 Thine, O goddess, turning hither  
 O benignant blameless brow;  
 Seeing enough of evil done  
 And lives withered as leaves wither  
 In the blasting of the sun;  
 Seeing enough of hunters dead,  
 Ruin enough of all our year,  
 Herds and harvest slain and shed,  
 Herdsmen stricken many an one,  
 Fruits and flocks consumed together,

And great length of deadly days,  
 Yet with reverent lips and fear  
 Turn we toward thee, turn and praise  
 For this lightening of clear weather  
 And prosperities begun.  
 For not seldom, when all air  
 As bright water without breath  
 Shines, and when men fear not, fate  
 Without thunder unaware  
 Breaks, and brings down death.  
 Joy with grief ye great gods give,  
 Good with bad, and overbear  
 All the pride of us that live,  
 All the high estate,  
 As ye long since overbore,  
 As in old time long before,  
 Many a strong man and a great,  
 All that were.  
 But do thou, sweet, otherwise,  
 Having heed of all our prayer,  
 Taking note of all our sighs;  
 We beseech thee by thy light,  
 By thy bow, and thy sweet eyes,  
 And the kingdom of the night,  
 Be thou favorable and fair;  
 By thine arrows and thy might  
 And Orion overthrown;  
 By the maiden thy delight,  
 By the indissoluble zone  
 And the sacred hair.

## FATE

Nor as with sundering of the earth  
 Nor as with cleaving of the sea  
 Nor fierce foreshadowings of a birth  
 Nor flying dreams of death to be,  
 Nor loosening of a large world's girth  
 And quickening of the body of night,  
 And sound of thunder in men's ears  
 And fire of lightning in men's sight,  
 Fate, mother of desires and fears,  
 Bore unto men the law of tears;  
 But sudden, an unfathered flame,  
 And broken out of night, she shone,  
 She, without body, without name,  
 In days forgotten and foregone;  
 And heaven rang round her as she came  
 Like smitten cymbals, and lay bare;  
 Clouds and great stars, thunders and  
 snows,  
 The blue sad fields and folds of air,  
 The life that breathes, the life that  
 grows,  
 All wind, all fire, that burns or blows,  
 Even all these knew her: for she is great;

The daughter of doom, the mother of  
 death,  
 The sister of sorrow; a lifelong weight  
 That no man's finger lighteneth,  
 Nor any god can lighten fate;  
 A landmark seen across the way  
 Where one race treads as the other trod;  
 An evil sceptre, an evil stay,  
 Wrought for a staff, wrought for a rod,  
 The bitter jealousy of God.

For death is deep as the sea,  
 And fate as the waves thereof.  
 Shall the waves take pity on thee  
 Or the south-wind offer thee love?  
 Wilt thou take the night for thy day  
 Or the darkness for light on thy way  
 Till thou say in thine heart, Enough?

Behold, thou art over fair, thou art over  
 wise;  
 The sweetness of spring in thine hair,  
 and the light in thine eyes.  
 The light of the spring in thine eyes,  
 and the sound in thine ears;  
 Yet thine heart shall wax heavy with  
 sighs and thine eyelids with tears.  
 Wilt thou cover thine hair with gold;  
 and with silver thy feet?  
 Hast thou taken the purple to fold thee,  
 and made thy mouth sweet?  
 Behold, when thy face is made bare, he  
 that loved thee shall hate;  
 Thy face shall be no more fair at the  
 fall of thy fate.  
 For thy life shall fall as a leaf and be  
 shed as the rain;  
 And the veil of thine head shall be grief;  
 and the crown shall be pain.

## THE DEATH OF MELEAGER

*Meleager.* Let your hands meet  
 Round the weight of my head,  
 Lift ye my feet  
 As the feet of the dead;  
 For the flesh of my body is molten, the  
 limbs of it molten as lead.

*Chorus.* O thy luminous face,  
 Thine imperious eyes!  
 O the grief, O the grace,  
 As of day when it dies!  
 Who is this bending over thee, lord, with  
 tears and suppression of sighs!

*Meleager.* Is a bride so fair?  
Is a maid so meek?  
With unchapleted hair,  
With unfileted cheek,  
*Atalanta*, the pure among women, whose  
name is as blessing to speak.

*Atalanta.* I would that with feet,  
Unsandalled, unshod,  
Overbold, overfleet,  
I had swum not nor trod  
From Arcadia to Calydon, northward, a  
blast of the envy of God.

*Meleager.* Unto each man his fate;  
Unto each as he saith  
In whose fingers the weight  
Of the world is as breath;  
Yet I would that in clamor of battle mine  
hands had laid hold upon death.

*Chorus.* Not with cleaving of shields  
And their clash in thine ear,  
When the lord of fought fields  
Breaketh spearshaft from spear,  
Thou art broken, our lord, thou art  
broken, with travail and labor and  
fear.

*Meleager.* Would God he had found me  
Beneath fresh boughs!  
Would God he had bound me  
Unawares in mine house,  
With light in mine eyes, and songs in my  
lips, and a crown on my brows!

*Chorus.* Whence art thou sent from us?  
Whither thy goal?  
How art thou rent from us,  
Thou that wert whole,  
As with severing of eyelids and eyes, as  
with sundering of body and soul!

*Meleager.* My heart is within me  
As an ash in the fire;  
Whosoever hath seen me,  
Without lute, without lyre,  
Shall sing of me grievous things, even  
things that were ill to desire.

*Chorus.* Who shall raise thee  
From the house of the dead?  
Or what man praise thee  
That thy praise may be said?  
Alas thy beauty! alas thy body! alas  
thine head!

*Meleager.* But thou, O mother,  
That dreamer of dreams,  
Wilt thou bring forth another  
To feel the sun's beams  
When I move among shadows a shadow,  
and wail by impassable streams?

*Ceneus.* What thing wilt thou leave me  
Now this thing is done?  
A man wilt thou give me,  
A son for my son,  
For the light of mine eyes, the desire of  
my life, the desirable one?

*Chorus.* Thou wert glad above others,  
Yea, fair beyond word;  
Thou wert glad among mothers;  
For each man that heard  
Of thee, praise there was added unto thee,  
as wings to the feet of a bird.

*Ceneus.* Who shall give back  
Thy face of old years,  
With travail made black,  
Grown gray among fears,  
Mother of sorrow, mother of cursing,  
mother of tears?

*Meleager.* Though thou art as fire  
Fed with fuel in vain,  
My delight, my desire,  
Is more chaste than the rain,  
More pure than the dewfall, more holy  
than stars are that live without  
stain.

*Atalanta.* I would that as water  
My life's blood had thawn,  
Or as winter's wan daughter  
Leaves lowland and lawn  
Spring-stricken, or ever mine eyes had  
beheld thee made dark in thy  
dawn.

*Chorus.* When thou dravest the men  
Of the chosen of Thrace,  
None turned him again  
Nor endured he thy face  
Clothed round with the blush of the  
battle, with light from a terrible  
place.

*Ceneus.* Thou shouldst die as he dies  
For whom none sheddeth tears;  
Filling thine eyes  
And fulfilling thine ears,

With the brilliance of battle, the bloom  
and the beauty, the splendor of  
spears.

*Chorus.* In the ears of the world  
It is sung, it is told,  
And the light thereof hurled  
And the noise thereof rolled  
From the Acroceranion snow to the  
ford of the fleece of gold.

*Meleager.* Would God ye could carry me  
Forth of all these;  
Heap sand and bury me  
By the Chersonese,  
Where the thundering Bosphorus answers  
the thunder of Pontic seas.

*Ceneus.* Dost thou mock at our praise  
And the singing begun  
And the men of strange days  
Praising my son  
In the folds of the hills of home, high  
places of Calydon?

*Meleager.* For the dead man no home is;  
Ah, better to be  
What the flower of the foam is  
In fields of the sea,  
That the sea-waves might be as my rai-  
ment, the gulf-stream a garment  
for me.

*Chorus.* Who shall seek thee and bring  
And restore thee thy day,  
When the dove dipped her wing,  
And the oars won their way  
Where the narrowing Symplegades  
whitened the straits of Propontis  
with spray?

*Meleager.* Will ye crown me my tomb  
Or exalt me my name,  
Now my spirits consume,  
Now my flesh is a flame?  
Let the sea slake it once, and men speak  
of me sleeping to praise me or  
shame.

*Chorus.* Turn back now, turn thee,  
As who turns him to wake;  
Though the life in thee burn thee,  
Couldst thou bathe it and slake  
Where the sea-ridge of Helle hangs  
heavier, and east upon west waters  
break?

*Meleager.* Would the winds blow me  
back  
Or the waves hurl me home?  
Ah, to touch in the track  
Where the pine learnt to roam  
Cold girdles and crowns of the sea-  
gods, cool blossoms of water and  
foam!

*Chorus.* The gods may release  
That they made fast;  
Thy soul shall have ease  
In thy limbs at the last;  
But what shall they give thee for life,  
sweet life that is overpast?

*Meleager.* Not the life of men's veins,  
Not of flesh that conceives;  
But the grace that remains,  
The fair beauty that cleaves  
To the life of the rains in the grasses, the  
life of the dew on the leaves.

*Chorus.* Thou wert helmsman and chief;  
Wilt thou turn in an hour,  
Thy limbs to the leaf,  
Thy face to the flower,  
Thy blood to the water, thy soul to the  
gods who divide and devour?

*Meleager.* The years are hungry,  
They wail all their days;  
The gods wax angry  
And weary of praise;  
And who shall bridle their lips? and who  
shall straighten their ways?

*Chorus.* The gods guard over us  
With sword and with rod;  
Weaving shadow to cover us,  
Heaping the sod,  
That law may fulfil herself wholly, to  
darken man's face before God.

FINAL CHORUS

Who shall contend with his lords  
Or cross them or do them wrong?  
Who shall bind them as with cords?  
Who shall tame them as with song?  
Who shall smite them as with swords?  
For the hands of their kingdom are  
strong.

## SONGS FROM CHASTELARD

MARY BEATON'S SONG <sup>1</sup>

Le navire  
Est à l'eau ;  
Entends rire  
Ce gros flot  
Que fait luire  
Et bruire  
Le vieux sire  
Aquila.

Dans l'espace  
Du grand air  
Le vent passe  
Comme un fer ;  
Siffle et sonne,  
Tombe et tonne ;  
Prend et donne  
A la mer.

Vois, la brise  
Tourne au nord,  
Et la bise  
Souffle et mord  
Sur ta pure  
Chevelure  
Qui murmure  
Et se tord.

Le navire  
Passe et luit,  
Puis chavire  
A grand bruit ;  
Et sur l'onde  
La plus blonde  
Tête au monde  
Flotte et fuit.

Moi, je rame,  
Et l'amour,  
C'est ma flamme,  
Mon grand jour,  
Ma chandelle  
Blanche et belle,  
Ma chapelle  
De séjour.

<sup>1</sup> Probably no excuse is needed for including here some examples of Swinburne's French verse, both for its own light and exquisite beauty, and because it so characteristically represents him. One of his chief distinctions is that of being perhaps the only Englishman who ever really understood and appreciated French poetry.

Toi, mon âme  
Et ma foi,  
Sois ma dame  
Et ma loi ;  
Sois ma mie,  
Sois Marie,  
Sois ma vie,  
Toute à moi !

## LOVE AT EBB

Between the sunset and the sea  
My love laid hands and lips on me ;  
Of sweet came sour, of day came night,  
Of long desire came brief delight :  
Ah love, and what thing came of thee  
Between the sea-downs and the sea ?

Between the sea-mark and the sea  
Joy grew to grief, grief grew to me ;  
Love turned to tears, and tears to fire,  
And dead delight to new desire ;  
Love's talk, love's touch there seemed to  
be  
Between the sea-sand and the sea.

Between the sundown and the sea  
Love watched one hour of love with me ;  
Then down the all-golden water-ways  
His feet flew after yesterday's ;  
I saw them come and saw them flee  
Between the sea-foam and the sea.

Between the sea-strand and the sea  
Love fell on sleep, sleep fell on me ;  
The first star saw twain turn to one  
Between the moonrise and the sun ;  
The next, that saw not love, saw me  
Between the sea-banks and the sea.

## THE QUEEN'S SONG

J'ai vu faner bien des choses,  
Mainte feuille aller au vent.  
En songeant aux vieilles roses,  
J'ai pleuré souvent.

Vois-tu dans les roses mortes  
Amour qui sourit caché ?  
O mon amant, à nos portes  
L'as-tu vu couché ?

As-tu vu jamais au monde  
Vénus chasser et courir ?  
Fille de l'onde, avec l'onde  
Doit-elle mourir ?



Aux jours de neige et de givre  
L'amour s'effeuille et s'endort ;  
Avec mai doit-il revivre,  
Ou bien est-il mort ?

Qui sait où s'en vont les roses ?  
Qui sait où s'en va le vent ?  
En songeant à telles choses,  
J'ai pleuré souvent. 1865.

### HYMN TO PROSERPINE

(AFTER THE PROCLAMATION IN ROME OF  
THE CHRISTIAN FAITH)

*Vicisti, Galilæe*

I HAVE lived long enough, having seen  
one thing, that love hath an end ;  
Goddess and maiden and queen, be near  
me now and befriend.  
Thou art more than the day or the mor-  
row, the seasons that laugh or that  
weep ;  
For these give joy and sorrow ; but thou,  
Proserpina, sleep.  
Sweet is the treading of wine, and sweet  
the feet of the dove ;  
But a goodlier gift is thine than foam of  
the grapes or love.  
Yea, is not even Apollo, with hair and  
harpstring of gold,  
A bitter God to follow, a beautiful God to  
behold ?  
I am sick of singing ; the bays burn deep  
and chafe : I am fain  
To rest a little from praise and grievous  
pleasure and pain.  
For the Gods we know not of, who give  
us our daily breath,  
We know they are cruel as love or life,  
and lovely as death.  
O Gods dethroned and deceased, cast  
forth, wiped out in a day !  
From your wrath is the world released, re-  
deemed from your chains, men say.  
New Gods are crowned in the city, their  
flowers have broken your rods ;  
They are merciful, clothed with pity, the  
young compassionate Gods.  
But for me their new device is barren, the  
days are bare ;  
Things long past over suffice, and men  
forgotten that were.  
Time and the Gods are at strife : ye  
dwell in the midst thereof,

Draining a little life from the barren  
breasts of love.  
I say to you, cease, take rest ; yea, I say  
to you all, be at peace,  
Till the bitter milk of her breast and the  
barren bosom shall cease.  
Wilt thou yet take all, Galilean ? but  
these thou shalt not take,  
The laurel, the palms and the pæan, the  
breast of the nymphs in the brake ;  
Breasts more soft than a dove's, that  
tremble with tenderer breath ;  
And all the wings of the Loves, and all  
the joy before death ;  
All the feet of the hours that sound as a  
single lyre,  
Dropped and deep in the flowers, with  
strings that flicker like fire.  
More than these wilt thou give, things  
fairer than all these things ?  
Nay, for a little we live, and life hath  
mutable wings.  
A little while and we die ; shall life not  
thrive as it may ?  
For no man under the sky lives twice,  
outliving his day.  
And grief is a grievous thing, and a man  
hath enough of his tears :  
Why should he labor, and bring fresh  
grief to blacken his years ?  
Thou hast conquered, O pale Galilean ;  
the world has grown gray from  
thy breath :  
We have drunken of things Lethean,  
and fed on the fulness of death.  
Laurel is green for a season, and love is  
sweet for a day ;  
But love grows bitter with treason, and  
laurel outlives not May.  
Sleep, shall we sleep after all ? for the  
world is not sweet in the end ;  
For the old faiths loosen and fall, the  
new years ruin and rend.  
Fate is a sea without shore, and the soul  
is a rock that abides ;  
But her ears are vexed with the roar and  
her face with the foam of the  
tides.  
O lips that the live blood faints in, the  
leavings of racks and rods !  
O ghastly glories of saints, dead limbs of  
gibbeted Gods !  
Though all men abase them before you  
in spirit, and all knees bend,  
I kneel not, neither adore you, but stand-  
ing, look to the end.

All delicate days and pleasant, all spirits  
 and sorrows are cast  
 Far out with the foam of the present that  
 sweeps to the surf of the past :  
 Where beyond the extreme sea-wall, and  
 between the remote sea-gates,  
 Waste water washes, and tall ships  
 founder, and deep death waits :  
 Where, mighty with deepening sides,  
 clad about with the seas as with  
 wings,  
 And impelled of invisible tides, and ful-  
 filled of unspeakable things,  
 White-eyed and poisonous-finned, shark-  
 toothed and serpentine-curved,  
 Rolls, under the whitening wind of the  
 future, the wave of the world.  
 The depths stand naked in sunder behind  
 it, the storms flee away ;  
 In the hollow before it the thunder is  
 taken and snared as a prey ;  
 In its sides is the north-wind bound ; and  
 its salt is of all men's tears ;  
 With light of ruin, and sound of changes,  
 and pulse of years :  
 With travail of day after day, and with  
 trouble of hour upon hour ;  
 And bitter as blood is the spray ; and the  
 crests are as fangs that devour :  
 And its vapor and storm of its steam as  
 the sighing of spirits to be ;  
 And its noise as the noise in a dream ;  
 and its depth as the roots of the  
 sea :  
 And the height of its heads as the height  
 of the utmost stars of the air :  
 And the ends of the earth at the might  
 thereof tremble, and time is made  
 bare.  
 Will ye bridle the deep sea with reins, will  
 ye chasten the high sea with rods ?  
 Will ye take her to chain her with chains,  
 who is older than all ye Gods ?  
 All ye as a wind shall go by, as a fire shall  
 ye pass and be past ;  
 Ye are Gods, and behold ye shall die, and  
 the waves be upon you at last.  
 In the darkness of time, in the deeps of  
 the years, in the changes of things,  
 Ye shall sleep as a slain man sleeps, and  
 the world shall forget you for kings.  
 Though the feet of thine high priests  
 tread where thy lords and our fore-  
 fathers trod,  
 Though these that were Gods are dead,  
 and thou being dead art a God,

Though before thee the throned Cytherean  
 be fallen, and hidden her head,  
 Yet thy kingdom shall pass, Galilean, thy  
 dead shall go down to thee dead.  
 Of the maiden thy mother, men sing as a  
 goddess with grace clad around ;  
 Thou art throned where another was  
 king ; where another was queen  
 she is crowned.  
 Yea, once we had sight of another : but  
 now she is queen, say these.  
 Not as thine, not as thine was our  
 mother, a blossom of flowering  
 seas,  
 Clothed round with the world's desire as  
 with raiment, and fair as the foam,  
 And fleeter than kindled fire, and a god-  
 dess and mother of Rome.  
 For thine came pale and a maiden, and  
 sister to sorrow ; but ours,  
 Her deep hair heavily laden with odor  
 and color of flowers,  
 White rose of the rose-white water, a  
 silver splendor, a flame,  
 Bent down unto us that besought her,  
 and earth grew sweet with her  
 name.  
 For thine came weeping, a slave among  
 slaves, and rejected ; but she  
 Came flushed from the full-flushed wave,  
 and imperial, her foot on the sea,  
 And the wonderful waters knew her, the  
 winds and the viewless ways,  
 And the roses grew rosier, and bluer the  
 sea-blue stream of the bays.  
 Ye are fallen, our lords by what token ?  
 we wist that ye should not fall.  
 Ye were all so fair that are broken ; and  
 one more fair than ye all.  
 But I turn to her still, having seen she  
 shall surely abide in the end ;  
 Goddess and maiden and queen, be near  
 me now and befriend.  
 O daughter of earth, of my mother, her  
 crown and blossom of birth,  
 I am also, I also, thy brother ; I go as I  
 came unto earth.  
 In the night where thine eyes are as moons  
 are in heaven, the night where  
 thou art,  
 Where the silence is more than all tunes,  
 where sleep overflows from the  
 heart,  
 Where the poppies are sweet as the rose in  
 our world, and the red rose is  
 white,

And the wind falls faint as it blows with  
 the fume of the flowers of the  
 night,  
 And the murmur of spirits that sleep in  
 the shadow of Gods from afar  
 Grows dim in thine ears and deep as the  
 deep dim soul of a star,  
 In the sweet low light of thy face, under  
 heavens untrod by the sun,  
 Let my soul with their souls find place,  
 and forget what is done and un-  
 done.  
 Thou art more than the Gods who num-  
 ber the days of our temporal  
 breath;  
 For these give labor and slumber; but  
 thou, Proserpina, death.  
 Therefore now at thy feet I abide for a  
 season in silence. I know  
 I shall die as my fathers died, and sleep  
 as they sleep; even so.  
 For the glass of the year is brittle wherein  
 we gaze for a span;  
 A little soul for a little bears up this corpse  
 which is man.<sup>1</sup>  
 So long I endure, no longer; and laugh  
 not again, neither weep.  
 For there is no God found stronger than  
 death; and death is a sleep.

1866.

## A MATCH

If love were what the rose is,  
 And I were like the leaf,  
 Our lives would grow together  
 In sad or singing weather,  
 Blown fields or flowerful closes,  
 Green pleasure or gray grief;  
 If love were what the rose is,  
 And I were like the leaf.

If I were what the words are,  
 And love were like the tune,  
 With double sound and single  
 Delight our lips would mingle,  
 With kisses glad as birds are  
 That get sweet rain at noon;  
 If I were what the words are  
 And love were like the tune.

If you were life, my darling,  
 And I your love were death,

We'd shine and snow together  
 Ere March made sweet the weather  
 With daffodil and starling  
 And hours of fruitful breath.  
 If you were life, my darling,  
 And I your love were death.

If you were thrall to sorrow,  
 And I were page to joy,  
 We'd play for lives and seasons  
 With loving looks and treasons  
 And tears of night and morrow  
 And laughs of maid and boy;  
 If you were thrall to sorrow,  
 And I were page to joy.

If you were April's lady,  
 And I were lord in May,  
 We'd throw with leaves for hours  
 And draw for days with flowers,  
 Till day like night were shady  
 And night were bright like day;  
 If you were April's lady,  
 And I were lord in May.

If you were queen of pleasure,  
 And I were king of pain,  
 We'd hunt down love together,  
 Pluck out his flying-feather,  
 And teach his feet a measure,  
 And find his mouth a rein;  
 If you were queen of pleasure,  
 And I were king of pain. 1866.

## A BALLAD OF BURDENS

THE burden of fair women. Vain delight,  
 And love self-slain in some sweet  
 shameful way,  
 And sorrowful old age that comes by  
 night  
 As a thief comes that has no heart by  
 day,  
 And change that finds fair cheeks and  
 leaves them gray,  
 And weariness that keeps awake for  
 hire,  
 And grief that says what pleasure used  
 to say;  
 This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of bought kisses. This is  
 sore,  
 A burden without fruit in child-bear-  
 ing;

<sup>1</sup> ψυχάριον εἰ βαστάζον νεκρόν. — EPIC-  
 TETUS.

Between the nightfall and the dawn three-  
score,  
Threescore between the dawn and  
evening.  
The shuddering in thy lips, the shud-  
dering  
In thy sad eyelids tremulous like fire,  
Makes love seem shameful and a  
wretched thing.  
This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of sweet speeches. Nay,  
kneel down,  
Cover thy head, and weep; for verily  
These market-men that buy thy white  
and brown  
In the last days shall take no thought  
for thee.  
In the last days like earth thy face  
shall be,  
Yea, like sea-marsh made thick with brine  
and mire,  
Sad with sick leavings of the sterile  
sea.  
This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of long living. Thou shalt  
fear  
Waking, and sleeping mourn upon thy  
bed;  
And say at night, "Would God the day  
were here,"  
And say at dawn "Would God the day  
were dead."  
With weary days thou shalt be clothed  
and fed,  
And wear remorse of heart for thine attire,  
Pain for thy girdle and sorrow upon  
thine head;  
This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of bright colors. Thou shalt  
see  
Gold tarnished, and the gray above the  
green;  
And as the thing thou seest thy face shall  
be,  
And no more as the thing beforetime  
seen.  
And thou shalt say of mercy "It hath  
been,"  
And living, watch the old lips and loves  
expire,  
And talking, tears shall take thy breath  
between.  
This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of sad sayings. In that day  
Thou shalt tell all thy days and hours,  
and tell  
Thy times and ways and words of love,  
and say  
How one was dear and one desirable,  
And sweet was life to hear and sweet to  
smell,  
But now with lights reverse the old hours  
retire  
And the last hour is shod with fire from  
hell.  
This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of four seasons. Rain in  
spring,  
White rain and wind among the tender  
trees;  
A summer of green sorrows gathering,  
Rank autumn in a mist of miseries,  
With sad face set towards the year, that  
sees  
The charred ash drop out of the dropping  
pyre,  
And winter wan with many maladies;  
This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of dead faces. Out of sight  
And out of love, beyond the reach of  
hands,  
Changed in the changing of the dark and  
light,  
They walk and weep about the barren  
lands  
Where no seed is nor any garner stands,  
Where in short breaths the doubtful days  
respire,  
And time's turned glass lets through  
the sighing sands;  
This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of much gladness. Life and  
lust  
Forsake thee, and the face of thy de-  
light;  
And underfoot the heavy hour strews  
dust;  
And overhead strange weathers burn  
and bite;  
And where the red was, lo, the blood-  
less white,  
And where truth was, the likeness of a  
liar.  
And where day was, the likeness of the  
night;  
This is the end of every man's desire.

## ENVOI

Princes, and ye whom pleasure quickeneth,  
 Heed well this rhyme before your  
     pleasure tire;  
 For life is sweet, but after life is death.  
 This is the end of every man's desire.  
 1866.

## RONDEL

KISSING her hair I sat against her feet,  
 Wove and unwove it, wound and found it  
     sweet;  
 Made fast therewith her hands, drew  
     down her eyes,  
 Deep as deep flowers and dreamy like  
     dim skies;  
 With her own tresses bound and found  
     her fair,  
 Kissing her hair.

Sleep were no sweeter than her face to me,  
 Sleep of cold sea-bloom under the cold  
     sea;  
 What pain could get between my face  
     and hers?  
 What new sweet thing would love not  
     relish worse?  
 Unless, perhaps, white death had kissed  
     me there,  
 Kissing her hair?  
 1866.

IN MEMORY OF WALTER SAVAGE  
LANDOR

BACK to the flower-town, side by side,  
 The bright months bring,  
 New-born, the bridegroom and the bride,  
 Freedom and spring.

The sweet land laughs from sea to sea,  
 Filled full of sun;  
 All things come back to her, being free, —  
 All things but one.

In many a tender wheaten plot  
 Flowers that were dead  
 Live, and old suns revive; but not  
 That holier head.

By this white wandering waste of sea,  
 Far north, I hear  
 One face shall never turn to me  
 As once this year;

Shall never smile and turn and rest  
 On mine as there,  
 Nor one most sacred hand be pressed  
 Upon my hair.

I came as one whose thoughts half linger,  
 Half run before;  
 The youngest to the oldest singer  
 That England bore.

I found him whom I shall not find  
 Till all grief end,  
 In holiest age our mightiest mind,  
 Father and friend.

But thou, if anything endure,  
 If hope there be,  
 O spirit that man's life left pure,  
 Man's death set free,

Not with disdain of days that were  
 Look earthward now:  
 Let dreams revive the reverend hair,  
 The imperial brow;

Come back in sleep, for in the life  
 Where thou art not  
 We find none like thee. Time and strife  
 And the world's lot

Move thee no more; but love at least,  
 And reverent heart,  
 May move thee, royal and released  
 Soul, as thou art.

And thou, his Florence, to thy trust  
 Receive and keep,  
 Keep safe his dedicated dust,  
 His sacred sleep.

So shall thy lovers, come from far,  
 Mix with thy name  
 As morning-star with evening-star  
 His faultless fame. 1866.

## THE GARDEN OF PROSERPINE

HERE, where the world is quiet,  
 Here, where all trouble seems  
 Dead winds' and spent waves' riot  
 In doubtful dreams of dreams;  
 I watch the green field growing  
 For reaping folk and sowing,  
 For harvest time and mowing,  
 A sleepy world of streams.



I am tired of tears and laughter,  
 And men that laugh and weep  
 Of what may come hereafter  
 For men that sow to reap :  
 I am weary of days and hours,  
 Blown buds of barren flowers,  
 Desires and dreams and powers  
 And everything but sleep.

Here life has death for neighbor,  
 And far from eye or ear  
 Wan waves and wet winds labor,  
 Weak ships and spirits steer ;  
 They drive adrift, and whither ,  
 They wot not who make thither ;  
 But no such winds blow hither,  
 And no such things grow here.

No growth of moor or coppice,  
 No heather-flower or vine,  
 But bloomless buds of poppies,  
 Green grapes of Proserpine,  
 Pale beds of blowing rushes  
 Where no leaf blooms or blushes,  
 Save this whereout she crushes  
 For dead men deadly wine.

Pale, without name or number,  
 In fruitless fields of corn,  
 They bow themselves and slumber  
 All night till light is born ;  
 And like a soul belated,  
 In hell and heaven unmated,  
 By cloud and mist abated  
 Comes out of darkness morn.

Though one were strong as seven,  
 He too with death shall dwell,  
 Nor wake with wings in heaven,  
 Nor weep for pains in hell ;  
 Though one were fair as roses,  
 His beauty clouds and closes ;  
 And well though love repose,  
 In the end it is not well.

Pale, beyond porch and portal,  
 Crowned with calm leaves, she stands  
 Who gathers all things mortal  
 With cold immortal hands ;  
 Her languid lips are sweeter  
 Than love's who fears to greet her  
 To men that mix and meet her  
 From many times and lands.

She waits for each and other,  
 She waits for all men born ;  
 Forgets the earth her mother,  
 The life of fruits and corn ;

And spring and seed and swallow  
 Take wing for her and follow  
 Where summer song rings hollow  
 And flowers are put to scorn.

There go the loves that wither,  
 The old loves with wearier wings ;  
 And all dead years draw thither,  
 And all disastrous things ;  
 Dead dreams of days forsaken,  
 Blind buds that snows have shaken,  
 Wild leaves that winds have taken,  
 Red strays of ruined springs.

We are not sure of sorrow,  
 And joy was never sure ;  
 To-day will die to-morrow  
 Time stoops to no man's lure ;  
 And love, grown faint and fretful  
 With lips but half regretful  
 Sighs, and with eyes forgetful  
 Weeps that no loves endure.

From too much love of living,  
 From hope and fear set free,  
 We thank with brief thanksgiving  
 Whatever gods may be  
 That no life lives for ever ;  
 That dead men rise up never ;  
 That even the weariest river  
 Winds somewhere safe to sea.

Then star nor sun shall waken,  
 Nor any change of light :  
 Nor sound of waters shaken,  
 Nor any sound or sight :  
 Nor wintry leaves nor vernal,  
 Nor days nor things diurnal ;  
 Only the sleep eternal  
 In an eternal night.

1866.

### LOVE AT SEA

WE are in love's land to-day ;  
 Where shall we go ?  
 Love, shall we start or stay,  
 Or sail or row ?  
 There's many a wind and way,  
 And never a May but May ;  
 We are in love's hand to-day ;  
 Where shall we go ?

Our landwind is the breath  
 Of sorrows kissed to death  
 And joys that were :

Our ballast is a rose;  
Our way lies where God knows  
And love knows where.  
We are in love's hand to-day —

Our seamen are fledged Loves,  
Our masts are bills of doves,  
Our decks fine gold;  
Our ropes are dead maids' hair,  
Our stores are love-shafts fair  
And manifold.  
We are in love's hand to-day —

Where shall we land you, sweet?  
On fields of strange men's feet,  
Or fields near home?  
Or where the fire-flowers blow,  
Or where the flowers of snow  
Or flowers of foam?  
We are in love's hand to-day —

Land me, she says, where love  
Shows but one shaft, one dove,  
One heart, one hand.  
— A shore like that, my dear,  
Lies where no man will steer,  
No maiden land.

*Imitated from Théophile Gautier.*  
1866.

### SAPPHICS

ALL the night sleep came not upon my  
eyelids,  
Shed not dew, nor shook nor unclosed a  
feather,  
Yet with lips shut close and with eyes of  
iron  
Stood and beheld me.

Then to me so lying awake a vision  
Came without sleep over the seas and  
touched me,  
Softly touched mine eyelids and lips;  
and I too,  
Full of the vision,

Saw the white implacable Aphrodite,  
Saw the hair unbound, and the feet un-  
sandalled  
Shine as fire of sunset on western waters;  
Saw the reluctant

Feet, the straining plumes of the doves  
that drew her,

Looking always, looking with necks re-  
verted,  
Back to Lesbos, back to the hills where-  
under  
Shone Mitylene;

Heard the flying feet of the Loves behind  
her  
Make a sudden thunder upon the waters,  
As the thunder flung from the strong  
unclosing  
Wings of a great wind.

So the goddess fled from her place, with  
awful  
Sound of feet and thunder of wings  
around her;  
While behind a clamor of singing women  
Severed the twilight.

Ah the singing, ah the delight, the passion!  
All the Loves wept, listening; sick with  
anguish,  
Stood the crowned nine Muses about  
Apollo;  
Fear was upon them,

While the tenth sang wonderful things  
they knew not.  
Ah, the tenth, the Lesbian! the nine  
were silent,  
None endured the sound of her song for  
weeping;  
Laurel by laurel,

Faded all their crowns; but about her  
forehead,  
Round her woven tresses and ashen  
temples  
White as dead snow, paler than grass in  
summer,  
Ravaged with kisses,

Shone a light of fire as a crown for ever.  
Yea, almost the implacable Aphrodite  
Paused, and almost wept; such a song  
was that song;  
Yea, by her name too

Called her, saying, "Turn to me, O my  
Sappho;"  
Yet she turned her face from the Loves,  
she saw not  
Tears or laughter darken immortal eye-  
lids,  
Heard not about her

Fearful fitful wings of the doves departing,  
 Saw not how the bosom of Aphrodite  
 Shook with weeping, saw not her shaken  
 raiment,  
 Saw not her hands wrung;

Saw the Lesbians kissing across their  
 smitten  
 Lutes with lips more sweet than the sound  
 of lute-strings,  
 Mouth to mouth and hand upon hand,  
 her chosen,  
 Fairer than all men;

Only saw the beautiful lips and fingers,  
 Full of songs and kisses and little whispers,  
 Full of music; only beheld among them  
 Soar, as a bird soars

Newly fledged, her visible song, a marvel,  
 Made of perfect sound and exceeding  
 passion,  
 Sweetly shapen, terrible, full of thunders,  
 Clothed with the wind's wings.

Then rejoiced she, laughing with love, and  
 scattered  
 Roses, awful roses of holy blossom;  
 Then the Loves thronged sadly with hid-  
 den faces  
 Round Aphrodite,

Then the Muses, stricken at heart, were  
 silent;  
 Yea, the gods waxed pale; such a song  
 was that song.  
 All reluctant, all with a fresh repulsion,  
 Fled from before her.

All withdrew long since, and the land was  
 barren,  
 Full of fruitless women and music only.  
 Now perchance, when winds are assuaged  
 at sunset,  
 Lulled at the dewfall,

By the gray sea-side, unassuaged, un-  
 heard of,  
 Unbeloved, unseen in the ebb of twilight,  
 Ghosts of outcast women return lament-  
 ing,

Purged not in Lethe,

Clothed about with flame and with tears,  
 and singing

Songs that move the heart of the shaken  
 heaven,  
 Songs that break the heart of the earth  
 with pity,  
 Hearing, to hear them. 1866.

## DEDICATION

### POEMS AND BALLADS, FIRST SERIES

THE sea gives her shells to the shingle,  
 The earth gives her streams to the sea;  
 There are many, but my gift is single,  
 My verses, the first-fruits of me.  
 Let the wind take the green and the gray  
 leaf  
 Cast forth without fruit upon air;  
 Take rose-leaf and vine-leaf and bay-leaf  
 Blown loose from the hair.

The night shakes them round me in  
 legions,  
 Dawn drives them before her like  
 dreams;  
 Time sheds them like snows on strange  
 regions,  
 Swept shoreward on infinite streams;  
 Leaves pallid and sombre and ruddy,  
 Dead fruits of the fugitive years;  
 Some stained as with wine and made  
 bloody,  
 And some as with tears.

Some scattered in seven years' traces,  
 As they fell from the boy that was then;  
 Long left among idle green places,  
 Or gathered but now among men;  
 On seas full of wonder and peril,  
 Blown white round the capes of the  
 north;  
 Or in islands where myrtles are sterile  
 And loves bring not forth.

O daughters of dreams and of stories  
 That life is not wearied of yet,  
 Faustine, Fragoletta, Dolores,  
 Félise and Yolande and Juliette,  
 Shall I find you not still, shall I miss you,  
 When sleep, that is true or that seems,  
 Comes back to me hopeless to kiss you,  
 O daughters of dreams?

They are past as a slumber that passes,  
 As the dew of a dawn of old time;  
 More frail than the shadows on glasses,  
 More fleet than a wave or a rhyme.

As the waves after ebb drawing seaward,  
 When their hollows are full of the night,  
 So the birds that flew singing to meward  
 Recede out of sight.

The songs of dead seasons, that wander  
 On wings of articulate words;  
 Lost leaves that the shore-wind may  
 squander,

Light flocks of untameable birds;  
 Some sang to me dreaming in class time  
 And truant in hand as in tongue;  
 For the youngest were born of boy's pas-  
 time,  
 The eldest are young.

Is there shelter while life in them lingers,  
 Is there hearing for songs that recede,  
 Tunes touched from a harp with men's  
 fingers,

Or blown with boy's mouth in a reed?  
 Is there place in the land of your labor,  
 Is there room in your world of delight,  
 Where change has not sorrow for neighbor  
 And day has not night?

In their wings though the sea-wind yet  
 quivers,

Will you spare not a space for them there  
 Made green with the running of rivers  
 And gracious with temperate air;  
 In the fields and the turreted cities  
 That cover from sunshine and rain  
 Fair passions and bountiful pities  
 And loves without stain?

In a land of clear colors and stories,  
 In a region of shadowless hours,  
 Where earth has a garment of glories  
 And a murmur of musical flowers;  
 In woods where the spring half uncovers  
 The flush of her amorous face,  
 By the waters that listen for lovers,  
 For these is there place?

For the song-birds of sorrow, that muffle  
 Their music as clouds do their fire:  
 For the storm-birds of passion, that ruffle  
 Wild wings in a wind of desire;  
 In the stream of the storm as it settles  
 Blown seaward, borne far from the sun,  
 Shaken loose on the darkness like petals  
 Dropped one after one?

Though the world of your hands be more  
 gracious  
 And lovelier in lordship of things

Clothed round by sweet art with the  
 spacious

Warm heaven of her imminent wings,  
 Let them enter, unfledged and nigh faint-  
 ing,  
 For the love of old loves and lost times;  
 And receive in your palace of painting  
 This revel of rhymes.

Though the seasons of man full of losses  
 Make empty the years full of youth,  
 If but one thing be constant in crosses,  
 Change lays not her hand upon truth;  
 Hopes die, and their tombs are for token  
 That the grief as the joy of them ends  
 Ere time that breaks all men has broken  
 The faith between friends.

Though the many lights dwindle to one  
 light,

There is help if the heaven has one;  
 Though the skies be discrowned of the  
 sunlight

And the earth dispossessed of the sun,  
 They have moonlight and sleep for re-  
 payment,

When, refreshed as a bride and set free,  
 With stars and sea-winds in her raiment,  
 Night sinks on the sea. 1866.

## AN APPEAL

ART thou indeed among these,  
 Thou of the tyrannous crew,  
 The kingdoms fed upon blood,  
 O queen from of old of the seas,  
 England, art thou of them too  
 That drink of the poisonous flood,  
 That hide under poisonous trees?

Nay, thy name from of old,  
 Mother, was pure, or we dreamed;  
 Purer we held thee than this,  
 Purer fain would we hold;  
 So goodly a glory it seemed,  
 A fame so bounteous of bliss,  
 So more precious than gold.

A praise so sweet in our ears,  
 That thou in the tempest of things  
 As a rock for a refuge shouldst stand,  
 In the blood-red river of tears  
 Poured forth for the triumph of kings;  
 A safeguard, a sheltering land,  
 In the thunder and torrent of years.

Strangers came gladly to thee,  
 Exiles, chosen of men,  
 Safe for thy sake in thy shade,  
 Sat down at thy feet and were free.  
 So men spake of thee then;  
 Now shall their speaking be stayed?  
 Ah, so let it not be!

Not for revenge or affright,  
 Pride, or a tyrannous lust,  
 Cast from thee the crown of thy praise.  
 Mercy was thine in thy might;  
 Strong when thou wert, thou wert just;  
 Now, in the wrong-doing days,  
 Cleave thou, thou at least, to the right.

How should one charge thee, how sway,  
 Save by the memories that were?  
 Not thy gold nor the strength of thy ships,  
 Nor the might of thine armies at bay,  
 Made thee, mother, most fair;  
 But a word from republican lips  
 Said in thy name in thy day.

Hast thou said it, and hast thou forgot?  
 Is thy praise in thine ears as a scoff?  
 Blood of men guiltless was shed,  
 Children, and souls without spot,  
 Shed, but in places far off;  
*Let slaughter no more be, said*  
 Milton; and slaughter was not.

Was it not said of thee too,  
 Now, but now, by thy foes,  
 By the slaves that had slain their France  
 And thee would slay as they slew —  
 "Down with her walls that enclose  
 Freemen that eye us askance,  
 Fugitives, men that are true!"

This was thy praise or thy blame  
 From bondsman or freeman — to be  
 Pure from pollution of slaves,  
 Clean of their sins, and thy name  
 Bloodless, innocent, free;  
 Now if thou be not, thy waves  
 Wash not from off thee thy shame.

Freeman he is not, but slave,  
 Whoso in fear for the State  
 Cries for surety of blood,  
 Help of gibbet and grave;  
 Neither is any land great  
 Whom, in her fear-stricken mood,  
 These things only can save.

Lo! how fair from afar,  
 Taintless of tyranny, stands  
 Thy mighty daughter, for years  
 Who trod the winepress of war, —  
 Shines with immaculate hands;  
 Slays not a foe, neither fears;  
 Stains not peace with a scar.

Be not as tyrant or slave,  
 England; be not as these,  
 Thou that wert other than they.  
 Stretch out thine hand, but to save;  
 Put forth thy strength, and release:  
 Lest there arise, if thou slay,  
 Thy shame as a ghost from the grave.  
 November, 1867.

### HERTHA

I AM that which began;  
 Out of me the years roll;  
 Out of me God and man;  
 I am equal and Whole;  
 God changes, and man, and the form of  
 them bodily; I am the soul.

Before ever land was,  
 Before ever the sea,  
 Or soft hair of the grass,  
 Or fair limbs of the tree,  
 Or the flesh-colored fruit of my branches,  
 I was, and thy soul was in me.

First life on my sources  
 First drifted and swam;  
 Out of me are the forces  
 That save it or damn;  
 Out of me man and woman, and wild-  
 beast and bird; before God was, I  
 am.

Beside or above me  
 Nought is there to go;  
 Love or unlove me,  
 Unknow me or know,  
 I am that which unloves me and loves;  
 I am stricken, and I am the blow.

I the mark that is missed  
 And the arrows that miss,  
 I the mouth that is kissed  
 And the breath in the kiss,  
 The search, and the sought, and the  
 seeker, the soul and the body that is.



I am that thing which blesses  
 My spirit elate;  
 That which caresses  
 With hands uncreate  
 My limbs unbegotten that measure the  
 length of the measure of fate.

But what thing dost thou now,  
 Looking Godward, to cry  
 "I am I, thou art thou,  
 I am low, thou art high?"  
 I am thou, whom thou seekest to find  
 him; find thou but thyself, thou  
 art I.

I the grain and the furrow,  
 The plough-cloven clod  
 And the ploughshare drawn  
 thorough,  
 The germ and the sod,  
 The deed and the doer, the seed and the  
 sower, the dust which is God.

Hast thou known how I fashioned  
 thee,  
 Child, underground?  
 Fire that impassioned thee,  
 Iron that bound,  
 Dim changes of water, what thing of all  
 these hast thou known of or found?

Canst thou say in thine heart  
 Thou hast seen with thine eyes  
 With what cunning of art  
 Thou wast wrought in what  
 wise,  
 By what force of what stuff thou wast  
 shapen, and shown on my breast to  
 the skies?

Who hath given, who hath sold it  
 thee,  
 Knowledge of me?  
 Hath the wilderness told it thee?  
 Hast thou learnt of the sea?  
 Hast thou communed in spirit with night?  
 have the winds taken counsel with  
 thee?

Have I set such a star  
 To show light on thy brow  
 That thou sawest from afar  
 What I show to thee now?  
 Have ye spoken as brethren together,  
 the sun and the mountains and thou?

What is here, dost thou know it?  
 What was, hast thou known?  
 Prophet nor poet  
 Nor tripod nor throne  
 Nor spirit nor flesh can make answer,  
 but only thy mother alone.

Mother not maker,  
 Born, and not made;  
 Though her children forsake her,  
 Allured or afraid  
 Praying prayers to the God of their  
 fashion, she stirs not for all that have  
 prayed.

A creed is a rod,  
 And a crown is of night;  
 But this thing is God,  
 To be man with thy might,  
 To grow straight in the strength of thy  
 spirit, and live out thy life as the  
 light.

I am in thee to save thee,  
 As my soul in thee saith,  
 Give thou as I gave thee,  
 Thy life-blood and breath,  
 Green leaves of thy labor, white flowers  
 of thy thought, and red fruit of thy  
 death.

Be the ways of thy giving  
 As mine were to thee;  
 The free life of thy living,  
 Be the gift of it free;  
 Not as servant to lord, nor as master to  
 slave, shalt thou give thee to me.

O children of banishment,  
 Souls overcast,  
 Were the lights ye see vanish meant  
 Alway to last,  
 Ye would know not the sun overshining  
 the shadows and stars overpast.

I that saw where ye trod  
 The dim paths of the night  
 Set the shadow called God  
 In your skies to give light;  
 But the morning of manhood is risen, and  
 the shadowless soul is in sight.

The tree many-rooted  
 That swells to the sky  
 With frondage red-fruited,  
 The life-tree am I;  
 In the buds of your lives is the sap of my  
 leaves: ye shall live and not die.

But the Gods of your fashion  
That take and that give,  
In their pity and passion  
That scourge and forgive,  
They are worms that are bred in the bark  
that falls off: they shall die and not  
live.

My own blood is what stanches  
The wounds in my bark:  
Stars caught in my branches  
Make day of the dark,  
And are worshipped as suns till the sunrise  
shall tread out their fires as a spark.

Where dead ages hide under  
The live roots of the tree,  
In my darkness the thunder  
Makes utterance of me;  
In the clash of my boughs with each other  
ye hear the waves sound of the sea.

That noise is of Time,  
As his feathers are spread  
And his feet set to climb  
Through the boughs overhead,  
And my foliage rings round him and  
rustles, and branches are bent with  
his tread.

The storm-winds of ages  
Blow through me and cease,  
The war-wind that rages,  
The spring-wind of peace,  
Ere the breath of them roughen my  
tresses, ere one of my blossoms in-  
crease.

All sounds of all changes,  
All shadows and lights  
On the world's mountain-ranges  
And stream-riven heights,  
Whose tongue is the wind's tongue and  
language of storm-clouds on earth-  
shaking nights;

All forms of all faces,  
All works of all hands  
In unsearchable places  
Of time-stricken lands,  
All death and all life, and all reigns and  
all ruins, drop through me as sands.

Though sore be my burden  
And more than ye know,  
And my growth have no guerdon  
But only to grow,

Yet I fail not of growing for lightnings  
above me or death worms below.

These too have their part in me.  
As I too in these;  
Such fire is at heart in me,  
Such sap is this tree's,  
Which hath in it all sounds and all secrets  
of infinite lands and of seas.

In the spring-colored hours  
When my mind was as May's,  
There brake forth of me flowers  
By centuries of days,  
Strong blossoms with perfume of man-  
hood, shot out from my spirit as rays.

And the sound of them springing  
And smell of their shoots  
Were as warmth and sweet singing  
And strength to my roots;  
And the lives of my children made perfect  
with freedom of soul were my fruits.

I bid you but be;  
I have need not of prayer;  
I have need of you free  
As your mouths of mine air;  
That my heart may be greater within me,  
beholding the fruits of me fair.

More fair than strange fruit is  
Of faith ye espouse;  
In me only the root is  
That blooms in your boughs;  
Behold now your God that ye made you,  
to feed him with faith of your vows.

In the darkening and whitening  
Abysses ador'd,  
With dayspring and lightning  
For lamp and for sword,  
God thunders in heaven, and his angels  
are red with the wrath of the Lord.

O my sons, O too dutiful  
Toward Gods not of me,  
Was not I enough beautiful?  
Was it hard to be free?  
For behold, I am with you, am in you  
and of you; look forth now and see.

Lo, wing'd with world's wonders,  
With miracles shod,  
With the fires of his thunders  
For raiment and rod,

God trembles in heaven, and his angels  
are white with the terror of God.

For his twilight is come on him,  
His anguish is here;  
And his spirits gaze dumb on him,  
Grown gray from his fear;  
And his hour taketh hold on him stricken,  
the last of his infinite year.

Thought made him and breaks  
him,  
Truth slays and forgives;  
But to you, as time takes him,  
This new thing it gives,  
Even love, the beloved Republic, that  
feeds upon freedom and lives.

For truth only is living,  
Truth only is whole,  
And the love of his giving  
Man's polestar and pole;  
Man, pulse of my centre, and fruit of my  
body, and seed of my soul.

One birth of my bosom;  
One beam of mine eye;  
One topmost blossom  
That scales the sky;  
Man, equal and one with me, man that is  
made of me, man that is I. 1871.

### THE PILGRIMS

"WHO is your lady of love, O ye that  
pass  
Singing? and is it for sorrow of that  
which was

That ye sing sadly, or dream of what  
shall be?  
For gladly at once and sadly it seems  
ye sing."

— "Our lady of love by you is un beholden  
For hands she hath none, nor eyes, nor  
lips, nor golden

Treasure of hair, nor face nor form;  
But we  
That love, we know her more fair  
than any thing."

— "Is she a queen, having great gifts to  
give?"

— "Yea, these: that whoso hath seen  
her shall not live

Except he serve her sorrowing, with  
strange pain,  
Travail and bloodshedding and  
bitterer tears;  
And when she bids die he shall surely die.  
And he shall leave all things under the sky,  
And go forth naked under sun and rain,  
And work and wait and watch out  
all his years."

— "Hath she on earth no place of habita-  
tion?"

— "Age to age calling, nation answering  
nation,  
Cries out, Where is she? and there is  
none to say;  
For if she be not in the spirit of men,  
For if in the inward soul she hath no place,  
In vain they cry unto her, seeking her face,  
In vain their mouths make much of  
her; for they  
Cry with vain tongues, till the heart  
lives again."

— "O ye that follow, and have ye no  
repentance?"

For on your brows is written a mortal  
sentence,  
An hieroglyph of sorrow, a fiery sign,  
That in your lives ye shall not pause  
or rest,

Nor have the sure sweet common love,  
nor keep

Friends and safe days, nor joy of life nor  
sleep."

— "These have we not, who have one  
thing, the divine  
Face and clear eyes of faith and fruit-  
ful breast."

— "And ye shall die before your thrones  
be won."

— "Yea, and the changed world and the  
liberal sun

Shall move and shine without us, and  
we lie

Dead; but if she too move on earth,  
and live,

But if the old world with all the old irons  
rent

Laugh and give thanks, shall we be not  
content?

Nay, we shall rather live, we shall not  
die,

Life being so little, and death so  
good to give."

— "And these men shall forget you." —

"Yea, but we  
Shall be a part of the earth and the an-  
cient sea,

And heaven-high air august, and awful  
fire,

And all things good; and no man's  
heart shall beat

But somewhat in it of our blood once  
shed

Shall quiver and quicken, as now in us  
the dead

Blood of men slain and the old same  
life's desire

Plants in their fiery footprints our  
fresh feet."

— "But ye that might be clothed with all  
things pleasant,

Ye are foolish that put off the fair soft  
present,

That clothe yourselves with the cold  
future air;

When mother and father and tender  
sister and brother

And the old live love that was shall be  
as ye,

Dust, and no fruit of loving life shall  
be."

— "She shall be yet who is more than  
all these were,

Than sister or wife or father unto us  
or mother."

— "Is this worth life, is this, to win for  
wages?

Lo, the dead mouths of the awful gray-  
grown ages,

The venerable, in the past that is their  
prison,

In the outer darkness, in the unopen-  
ing grave,

Laugh, knowing how many as ye now say  
have said,

How many, and all are fallen, are fallen  
and dead:

Shall ye dead rise, and these dead have  
not risen?"

— "Not we but she, who is tender  
and swift to save."

— "Are ye not weary and faint not by  
the way,

Seeing night by night devoured of day  
by day,

Seeing hour by hour consumed in sleep-  
less fire?

Sleepless; and ye too, when shall ye  
too sleep?"

— "We are weary in heart and head, in  
hands and feet,

And surely more than all things sleep were  
sweet, —

Than all things save the inexorable  
desire

Which whoso knoweth shall neither  
faint nor weep."

— "Is this so sweet that one were fain to  
follow?

Is this so sure where all men's hopes are  
hollow,

Even this your dream, that by much  
tribulation

Ye shall make whole flawed hearts,  
and bowed necks straight?"

— "Nay, though our life were blind, our  
death were fruitless,

Not therefore were the whole world's  
high hope rootless;

But man to man, nation would turn to  
nation,

And the old life live, and the old  
great word be great."

— "Pass on, then, and pass by us, and  
let us be,

For what light think ye after life to see?  
And if the world fare better will ye

know?  
And if man triumph who shall seek  
you and say?"

— "Enough of light is this for one life's  
span,

That all men born are mortal, but not  
man;

And we men bring death lives by night  
to sow,

That men may reap and eat and live  
by day."

1871.

## TO WALT WHITMAN IN AMERICA

SEND but a song oversea for us,

Heart of their hearts who are free,

Heart of their singer, to be for us

More than our singing can be;

Ours, in the tempest at error,

With no light but the twilight of terror;

Send us a song oversea!

Sweet-smelling of pine leaves and grasses,  
 And blown as a tree through and through  
 With the winds of the keen mountain-  
   passes,  
 And tender as sun-smitten dew;  
 Sharp-tongued as the winter that shakes  
 The wastes of your limitless lakes,  
   Wide-eyed as the sea-line's blue.

O strong-winged soul with prophetic  
 Lips hot with the bloodbeats of song,  
 With tremor of heartstrings magnetic,  
   With thoughts as thunders in throng,  
 With consonant ardors of chords  
 That pierce men's souls as with swords  
 And hale them hearing along.

Make us, too, music, to be with us  
 As a word from a world's heart warm,  
 To sail the dark as a sea with us,  
   Full-sailed, outsing the storm,  
 A song to put fire in our ears  
 Whose burning shall burn up tears,  
   Whose sign bid battle reform;

A note in the ranks of a clarion,  
 A word in the wind of cheer,  
 To consume as with lightning the carrion  
   That makes time foul for us here;  
 In the air that our dead things infest  
 A blast of the breath of the west,  
   Till east way as west way is clear.

Out of the sun beyond sunset,  
 From the evening whence morning  
   shall be,  
 With the rollers in measureless onset,  
   With the van of the storming sea,  
 With the world-wide wind, with the breath  
 That breaks ships driven upon death,  
   With the passion of all things free,

With the sea-steeds footless and frantic,  
 White myriads for death to bestride  
 In the charge of the ruining Atlantic  
   Where deaths by regiments ride,  
 With clouds and clamors of waters,  
 With a long note shriller than slaughter's  
   On the furrowless fields world-wide,

With terror, with ardor and wonder,  
 With the soul of the season that wakes  
 When the weight of a whole year's thunder  
   In the tidestream of autumn breaks,  
 Let the flight of the wide-winged word  
 Come over, come in and be heard,  
   Take form and fire for our sakes.

For a continent bloodless with travail  
 Here toils and brawls as it can,  
 And the web of it who shall unravel  
   Of all that peer on the plan;  
 Would fain grow men, but they grow not,  
 And fain be free, but they know not  
   One name for freedom and man?

One name, not twain for division;  
 One thing, not twain, from the birth;  
 Spirit and substance and vision,  
   Worth more than worship is worth;  
 Unbeheld, unadored, undivined,  
 The cause, the centre, the mind,  
   The secret and sense of the earth

Here as a weakling in irons,  
 Here as a weanling in bands  
 As a prey that the stake-net environs,  
   Our life that we looked for stands;  
 And the man-child naked and dear,  
 Democracy, turns on us here  
   Eyes trembling, with tremulous hands.

It sees not what season shall bring to it  
 Sweet fruit of its bitter desire;  
 Few voices it hears yet sing to it,  
   Few pulses of hearts reaspire:  
 Foresees not time, nor forehears  
 The noises of imminent years,  
   Earthquake, and thunder, and fire:

When crowned and weaponed and curb-  
   less  
 It shall walk without helm or shield  
 The bare burnt furrows and herbless  
   Of war's last flame-stricken field,  
 Till godlike, equal with time,  
 It stand in the sun sublime,  
   In the godhead of man revealed.

Round your people and over them  
 Light like raiment is drawn,  
 Close as a garment to cover them  
   Wrought not of mail nor of lawn:  
 Here, with hope hardly to wear,  
 Naked nations and bare  
   Swim, sink, strike out for the dawn.

Chains are here, and a prison,  
 Kings, and subjects, and shame:  
 If the God upon you be arisen,  
   How should our songs be the same?  
 How in confusion of change,  
 How shall we sing, in a strange  
   Land songs praising his name?



God is buried and dead to us,  
 Even the spirit of earth,  
 Freedom: so have they said to us,  
 Some with mocking and mirth,  
 Some with heartbreak and tears:  
 And a God without eyes, without ears,  
 Who shall sing of him, dead in the birth?

The earth-god Freedom, the lonely  
 Face lightening, the footprint unshod.  
 Not as one man crucified only  
 Nor scourged with but one life's rod:  
 The soul that is substance of nations,  
 Reincarnate with fresh generations;  
 The great god Man, which is God.

But in weariest of years and obscurest  
 Doth it live not at heart of all things  
 The one God and one spirit, a purest  
 Life, fed from unstanchable springs?  
 Within love, within hatred it is,  
 And its seed in the stripe as the kiss,  
 And in slaves is the germ, and in kings.

Freedom we call it, for holier  
 Name of the soul's there is none;  
 Surelier it labors, if slower,  
 Than the metres of star or of sun;  
 Slowlier than life unto breath,  
 Surelier than time unto death,  
 It moves till its labor be done.

Till the motion be done and the measure  
 Circling through season and clime,  
 Slumber and sorrow and pleasure,  
 Vision of virtue and crime;  
 Till consummate with conquering eyes,  
 A soul disembodied, it rise  
 From the body transfigured of time.

Till it rise and remain and take station  
 With the stars of the world that rejoice;  
 Till the voice of its heart's exultation  
 Be as their an invariable voice,  
 By no discord of evil estranged,  
 By no pause, by no breach in it changed,  
 By no clash in the chord of its choice.

It is one with the world's generations,  
 With the spirit, the star, and the sod:  
 With the kingless and king-stricken  
 nations,  
 With the cross, and the chain, and the  
 rod;

The most high, the most secret, most lonely,  
 The earth-soul Freedom, that only  
 Lives, and that only is God. 1871.

# FROM MATER TRIUMPHALIS

[TO LIBERTY]

I AM thine harp between thine hands,  
 O mother!  
 All my strong chords are strained with  
 love of thee.  
 We grapple in love and wrestle, as each  
 with other  
 Wrestle the wind and the reluctant  
 sea.

I am no courtier of thee sober-suited,  
 Who loves a little for a little pay.  
 Me not thy winds and storms, nor thrones  
 disrooted,  
 Nor molten crowns, nor thine own  
 sins, dismay.

Sinned hast thou sometime, therefore art  
 thou sinless;  
 Stained hast thou been, who art there-  
 fore without stain;  
 Even as man's soul is kin to thee, but  
 kinless  
 Thou, in whose womb Time sows the  
 all-various grain.

I do not bid thee spare me, O dreadful  
 mother!  
 I pray thee that thou spare not, of thy  
 grace.  
 How were it with me then, if ever another  
 Should come to stand before thee in  
 this my place?

I am the trumpet at thy lips, thy clarion,  
 Full of thy cry, sonorous with thy  
 breath;  
 The graves of souls born worms, and  
 creeds grown carrion  
 Thy blast of judgment fills with fires  
 of death.

Thou art the player whose organ-keys  
 are thunders,  
 And I, beneath thy foot, the pedal  
 pressed;  
 Thou art the ray whereat the rent night  
 sunders,  
 And I the cloulet borne upon thy  
 breast.

I shall burn up before thee, pass and  
 perish,  
 As haze in sunrise on the red sea-line;

But thou from dawn to sunset shall  
cherish  
The thoughts that led and souls that  
lighted mine.

Reared between night and noon and truth  
and error,  
Each twilight-travelling bird that trills  
and screams  
Sickens at midday, nor can face for  
terror  
The imperious heaven's inevitable  
extremes.

I have no spirit of skill with equal  
fingers  
At sign to sharpen or to slacken strings;  
I keep no time of song with gold-perched  
singers  
And chirp of linnets on the wrists of  
kins.

I am thy storm-thrush of the days that  
darken,  
Thy petrel in the foam that bears thy  
bark  
To port through night and tempest: if  
thou hearken,  
My voice is in thy heaven before the  
lark.

My song is in the mist that hides thy  
morning,  
My cry is up before the day for thee;  
I have heard thee and beheld thee and  
give warning,  
Before thy wheels divide the sky and  
sea.

Birds shall wake with thee voiced and  
feathered fairer,  
To see in summer what I see in spring;  
I have eyes and heart to endure thee, O  
thunder-bearer,  
And they shall be who shall have  
tongues to sing.

I have love at least, and have not fear,  
and part not  
From thine unnavigable and wingless  
way;  
Thou tarriest, and I have not said thou  
art not,  
Nor all thy night long have denied thy  
day.

Darkness to daylight shall lift up thy  
paean,  
Hill to hill thunder, vale cry back to  
vale,  
With wind-notes as of eagles Æschylean,  
And Sappho singing in the nightin-  
gale.

Sung to by mighty sons of dawn and  
daughters,  
Of this night's songs thine ear shall  
keep but one, —  
That supreme song which shook the  
channelled waters,  
And called thee skyward as God calls  
the sun.

Come, though all heaven again be fire  
above thee;  
Though death before thee come to clear  
thy sky;  
Let us but see in his thy face who love  
thee;  
Yea, though thou slay us, arise, and let  
us die. 1871.

## COR CORDIUM

[SHELLEY]

O HEART of hearts, the chalice of love's  
fire,  
Hid round with flowers and all the bounty  
of bloom;  
O wonderful and perfect heart, for whom  
The lyrist liberty made life a lyre;  
O heavenly heart, at whose most dear  
desire  
Dead love, living and singing, cleft his  
tomb,  
And with him risen and regent in death's  
room  
All day thy choral pulses rang full  
choir;  
O heart whose beating blood was running  
song,  
O sole thing sweeter than thine own songs  
were,  
Help us for thy free love's sake to be  
free,  
True for thy truth's sake, for thy  
strength's sake strong,  
Till very liberty make clean and fair  
The nursing earth as the sepulchral sea. 1871.

## "NON DOLET"

It does not hurt. She looked along the  
 knife  
 Smiling, and watched the thick drops  
 mix and run  
 Down the sheer blade; not that which  
 had been done  
 Could hurt the sweet sense of the Roman  
 wife,  
 But that which was to do yet ere the  
 strife  
 Could end for each forever, and the  
 sun:  
 Nor was the palm yet nor was peace yet  
 won  
 While pain had power upon her husband's  
 life.  
 It does not hurt, Italia. Thou art  
 more  
 Than bride to bridegroom; how shalt  
 thou not take  
 The gift love's blood has reddened for  
 thy sake?  
 Was not thy lifeblood given for us be-  
 fore?  
 And if love's heartblood can avail thy  
 need,  
 And thou not die, how should it hurt  
 indeed? 1871.

## THE OBLATION

Ask nothing more of me, sweet,  
 All I can give you I give.  
 Heart of my heart, were it more,  
 More would be laid at your feet:  
 Love that should help you to live,  
 Song that should spur you to soar.

All things were nothing to give  
 Once to have sense of you more,  
 Touch you and taste of you, sweet,  
 Think you and breathe you and live,  
 Swept of your wings as they soar,  
 Trodden by chance of your feet.

I that have love and no more  
 Give you but love of you, sweet:  
 He that hath more, let him give;  
 He that hath wings, let him soar;  
 Mine is the heart at your feet  
 Here, that must love you to live.  
 1871.

## A FORSAKEN GARDEN

In a coign of the cliff between lowland  
 and highland,  
 At the sea-down's edge between wind-  
 ward and lee,  
 Walled round with rocks as an inland  
 island,  
 The ghost of a garden fronts the sea.  
 A girdle of brushwood and thorn en-  
 closes  
 The steep square slope of the blossom-  
 less bed  
 Where the weeds that grew green from the  
 graves of its roses  
 Now lie dead.

The fields fall southward, abrupt and  
 broken,  
 To the low last edge of the long lone  
 land.  
 If a step should sound or a word be  
 spoken,  
 Would a ghost not rise at the strange  
 guest's hand?  
 So long have the gray bare walks lain  
 guestless,  
 Through branches and briars if a man  
 make way,  
 He shall find no life but the sea-wind's,  
 restless  
 Night and day.

The dense hard passage is blind and stifled  
 That crawls by a track none turn to  
 climb  
 To the strait waste place that the years  
 have rifled  
 Of all but the thorns that are touched  
 not of time.  
 The thorns he spares when the rose is  
 taken;  
 The rocks are left when he wastes the  
 plain;  
 The wind that wanders, the weeds wind-  
 shaken,  
 These remain.

Not a flower to be pressed of the foot that  
 falls not;  
 As the heart of a dead man the seed  
 plots are dry;  
 From the thicket of thorns whence the  
 nightingale calls not,  
 Could she call, there were never a rose  
 to reply.

Over the meadows that blossom and  
wither,  
Rings but the note of a sea-bird's song.  
Only the sun and the rain come hither  
All year long.

The sun burns sear, and the rain di-  
shevels  
One gaunt bleak blossom of scentless  
breath.

Only the wind here hovers and revels  
In a round where life seems barren as  
death.

Here there was laughing of old, there was  
weeping,  
Haply, of lovers none ever will know,  
Whose eyes went seaward a hundred  
sleeping  
Years ago.

Heart handfast in heart as they stood,  
"Look thither,"

Did he whisper? "Look forth from  
the flowers to the sea;  
For the foam-flowers endure when the  
rose-blossoms wither,  
And men that love lightly may die —  
But we?"

And the same wind sang, and the same  
waves whitened,  
And or ever the garden's last petals  
were shed,

In the lips that had whispered, the eyes  
that had lightened,  
Love was dead.

Or they loved their life through, and then  
went whither?

And were one to the end — but what  
end who knows?

Love deep as the sea as a rose must wither,  
As the rose-red seaweed that mocks the  
rose.

Shall the dead take thought for the dead  
to love them?

What love was ever as deep as a grave?  
They are loveless now as the grass above  
them  
Or the wave.

All are at one now, roses and lovers,  
Not known of the cliffs and the fields  
and the sea.

Not a breath of the time that has been  
hovers

In the air now soft with a summer to be.

Not a breath shall there sweeten the  
seasons hereafter

Of the flowers or the lovers that laugh  
now or weep,

When, as they that are free now of weep-  
ing and laughter,

We shall sleep.

Here death may deal not again for-  
ever;

Here change may come not till all  
change end.

From the graves they have made they  
shall rise up never,

Who have left naught living to ravage  
and rend.

Earth, stones, and thorns of the wild  
ground growing,

When the sun and the rain live, these  
shall be;

Till a last wind's breath upon all these  
blowing

Roll the sea.

Till the slow sea rise and the sheer cliff  
crumble,

Till terrace and meadow the deep gulfs  
drink,

Till the strength of the waves of the high  
tides humble

The fields that lessen, the rocks that  
shrink,

Here now in his triumph where all things  
falter,

Stretched out on the spoils that his  
own hand spread,

As a god self-slain on his own strange  
altar,

Death lies dead.

July, 1876.

## A BALLAD OF DREAMLAND

I HID my heart in a nest of roses,  
Out of the sun's way, hidden apart;  
In a softer bed than the soft white snow's  
is,

Under the roses I hid my heart.  
Why would it sleep not? why should  
it start,

When never a leaf of the rose-tree stirred?  
What made sleep flutter his wings and  
part?

Only the song of a secret bird.

Lie still, I said, for the wind's wing  
 closes,  
 And mild leaves muffle the keen sun's  
 dart;  
 Lie still, for the wind on the warm seas  
 dozes,  
 And the wind is unquieter yet than  
 thou art.  
 Does a thought in thee still as a thorn's  
 wound smart?  
 Does the fang still fret thee of hope de-  
 ferred?  
 What bids the lips of thy sleep dispart?  
 Only the song of a secret bird.

The green land's name that a charm en-  
 closes,  
 It never was writ in the traveller's  
 chart,  
 And sweet on its trees as the fruit that  
 grows is,  
 It never was sold in the merchant's  
 mart.  
 The swallows of dreams through its dim  
 fields dart,  
 And sleep's are the tunes in its tree-tops  
 heard;  
 No hound's note wakens the wildwood  
 hart,  
 Only the song of a secret bird.

## ENVOI

In the world of dreams I have chosen my  
 part,  
 To sleep for a season and hear no word  
 Of true love's truth or of light love's art,  
 Only the song of a secret bird.  
 September, 1876.

## A BALLAD OF FRANÇOIS VILLON,

## PRINCE OF ALL BALLAD-MAKERS

BIRD of the bitter bright gray golden  
 morn,  
 Scarce risen upon the dusk of dolorous  
 years,  
 First of us all and sweetest singer born,  
 Whose far shrill note the world of new  
 men hears  
 Cleave the cold shuddering shade as  
 twilight clears;  
 When song new-born put off the old  
 world's attire

And felt its tune on her changed lips ex-  
 pire,  
 Writ foremost on the roll of them that  
 came  
 Fresh girt for service of the latter lyre,  
 Villon, our sad bad glad mad brother's  
 name!

Alas, the joy, the sorrow, and the scorn,  
 That clothed thy life with hopes and  
 sins and fears,  
 And gave thee stones for bread and tares  
 for corn  
 And plume-plucked gaol-birds for thy  
 starveling peers,  
 Till death clipt close their flight with  
 shameful shears;  
 Till shifts came short and loves were  
 hard to hire,  
 When lilt of song nor twitch of twangling  
 wire  
 Could buy thee bread or kisses; when  
 light fame  
 Spurned like a ball and haled through  
 brake and briar,  
 Villon, our sad bad glad mad brother's  
 name!

Poor splendid wings so frayed and soiled  
 and torn!  
 Poor kind wild eyes so dashed with  
 light quick tears!  
 Poor perfect voice, most blithe when most  
 forlorn,  
 That rings athwart the sea whence no  
 man steers,  
 Like joy-bells crossed with death-bells  
 in our ears!  
 What far delight has cooled the fierce  
 desire  
 That, like some ravenous bird, was  
 strong to tire  
 On that frail flesh and soul consumed  
 with flame,  
 But left more sweet than roses to re-  
 spire,  
 Villon, our sad bad glad mad brother's  
 name?

## ENVOI

Prince of sweet songs made out of tears  
 and fire,  
 A harlot was thy nurse, a God thy sire;  
 Shame soiled thy song, and song  
 assailed thy shame.



But from thy feet now death has washed  
the mire,  
Love reads out first at head of all our  
quire,  
Villon, our sad bad glad mad brother's  
name. September, 1877.

TO LOUIS KOSSUTH

LIGHT of our fathers' eyes, and in our  
own  
Star of the unsetting sunset! for thy  
name  
That on the front of noon was as a flame  
In the great year nigh twenty years  
agone  
When all the heavens of Europe shook  
and shone  
With stormy wind and lightning, keeps  
its fame  
And bears its witness all day through the  
same;  
Not for past days and great deeds past  
alone,  
Kossuth, we praise thee as our Landor  
praised,  
But that now too we know thy voice up-  
raised,  
Thy voice, the trumpet of the truth of  
God,  
Thine hand, the thunder-bearer's, raised  
to smite  
As with heaven's lightning for a sword and  
rod  
Men's heads abased before the Musco-  
vite. February, 1878.

CHILD'S SONG

WHAT is gold worth, say,  
Worth for work or play,  
Worth to keep or pay,  
Hide or throw away,  
Hope about or fear?  
What is love worth, pray?  
Worth a tear?

Golden on the mould  
Lie the dead leaves rolled  
Of the wet woods old,  
Yellow leaves and cold,  
Woods without a dove;  
Gold is worth but gold;  
Love's worth love. 1878.

TRIADS

I

THE word of the sun to the sky,  
The word of the wind to the sea,  
The word of the moon to the night,  
What may it be?

The sense of the flower to the fly,  
The sense of the bird to the tree,  
The sense of the cloud to the light,  
Who can tell me?

The song of the fields to the kye,  
The song of the lime to the bee,  
The song of the depth to the height,  
Who knows all three?

II

The message of April to May,  
That May sends on into June  
And June gives out to July  
For birthday boon;

The delight of the dawn in the day,  
The delight of the day in the noon,  
The delight of a song in a sigh  
That breaks the tune;

The secret of passing away,  
The cast of the change of the moon,  
None knows it with ear or with eye,  
But all will soon.

III

The live wave's love for the shore,  
The shore's for the wave as it dies,  
The love of the thunder-fire  
That sears the skies —

We shall know not though life wax  
hoar,  
Till all life, spent into sighs,  
Burn out as consumed with desire  
Of death's strange eyes;

Till the secret be secret no more  
In the light of one hour as it flies,  
Be the hour as of suns that expire  
Or suns that rise. 1878.

## ON THE CLIFFS

*ἡμερόφωνος ἀηδὼν. — SAPPHO.*

BETWEEN the moondawn and the sun-  
down here  
The twilight hangs half starless; half  
the sea  
Still quivers as for love or pain or fear  
Or pleasure mightier than these all may  
be.  
A man's live heart might beat  
Wherein a God's with mortal blood should  
meet  
And fill its pulse too full to bear the  
strain  
With fear or love or pleasure's twin-born  
pain.  
Fiercely the gaunt woods to the grim  
soil cling  
That bears for all fair fruits  
Wan wild sparse flowers of windy and  
wintry spring  
Between the tortive serpent-shapen roots  
Wherethrough their dim growth hardly  
strikes and shoots  
And shows one gracious thing;  
Hardly, to speak for summer one sweet  
word  
Of summer's self scarce heard.  
But higher the steep green sterile fields,  
thicket  
With flowerless hawthorn even to the  
upward verge  
Whence the woods gathering watch new  
cliffs emerge,  
Higher than their highest of crowns that  
sea-winds fret,  
Holds fast, for all that night or wind can  
say,  
Some pale pure color yet,  
Too dim for green and luminous for gray.  
Between the climbing inland cliffs above  
And these beneath that breast and break  
the bay,  
A barren peace too soft for hate or love  
Broods on an hour too dim for night or  
day.  
O wind, O wingless wind that walk'st the  
sea,  
Weak wind, wing-broken, wearier wind  
than we,  
Who are yet not spirit-broken, maimed  
like thee,  
Who wail not in our inward night as thou  
In the outer darkness now,

What word has the old sea given thee for  
mine ear  
From thy faint lips to hear?  
For some word would she send me, know-  
ing not how.

Nay, what far other word  
Than ever of her was spoken, or of me  
Or all my winged white kinsfolk of the sea  
Between fresh wave and wave was ever  
heard,  
Cleaves the clear dark enwinding tree  
with tree  
Too close for stars to separate and to see  
Enmeshed in multitudinous unity?  
What voice of what strong God hath  
stormed and stirred  
The fortified rock of silence, rent apart  
Even to the core Night's all maternal  
heart?  
What voice of God grown heavenlier in a  
bird,  
Made keener of edge to smite  
Than lightning, — yea, thou knowest, O  
mother Night,  
Keen as that cry from thy strange chil-  
dren sent<sup>1</sup>  
Wherewith the Athenian judgment-  
shrine was rent,  
For wrath that all their wrath was vainly  
spent,  
Their wrath for wrong made right  
By justice in her own divine despite  
That bade pass forth unblamed  
The sinless matricide and unashamed?  
Yea, what new cry is this, what note  
more bright  
Than their song's wing of words was dark  
of flight,  
What word is this thou hast heard,  
Thine and not thine or theirs, O Night,  
what word  
More keen than lightning and more sweet  
than light?  
As all men's hearts grew godlike in one  
bird  
And all those hearts cried on thee, crying  
with might,  
Hear us, O mother Night!

Dumb is the mouth of darkness as of death:  
Light, sound and life are one  
In the eyes and lips of dawn that draw the  
sun

<sup>1</sup> In Aeschylus' *Eumenides*.

To hear what first child's word with glim-  
mering breath  
Their weak wan weanling child the twi-  
light saith;  
But night makes answer none.

God, if thou be god, — bird, if bird thou  
be, —

Do thou then answer me.  
For but one word, what wind soever  
blow,

Is blown up usward ever from the sea.  
In fruitless years of youth dead long ago  
And deep beneath their own dead leaves  
and snow

Buried, I heard with bitter heart and sere  
The same sea's word unchangeable, nor  
knew

But that mine own life-days were change-  
less too,

And sharp and salt with unshed tear on  
tear,

And cold and fierce and barren; and my  
soul,

Sickening, swam weakly with bated  
breath

In a deep sea like death,  
And felt the wind buffet her face with  
brine

Hard, and harsh thought on thought in  
long bleak roll

Blown by keen gusts of memory sad as  
thine

Heap the weight up of pain, and break,  
and leave

Strength scarce enough to grieve  
In the sick heavy spirit, unmanned with  
strife

Of waves that beat at the tired lips of life.

Nay, sad may be man's memory, sad  
may be

The dream he weaves him as for shadow of  
thee,

But scarce one breathing-space, one  
heartbeat long,

Wilt thou take shadow of sadness on thy  
song.

Not thou, being more than man or man's  
desire,

Being bird and God in one,  
With throat of gold and spirit of the sun;

The sun whom all our souls and songs call  
sire,

Whose godhead gave thee, chosen of all  
our quire,

Thee only of all that serve, of all that sing  
Before our sire and king,

Borne up some space on time's world-  
wandering wing,

This gift, this doom, to bear till time's  
wing tire —

Life everlasting of eternal fire.

Thee only of all; yet can no memory say  
How many a night and day

My heart has been as thy heart, and my  
life

As thy life is, a sleepless hidden thing,  
Full of the thirst and hunger of winter

and spring,  
That seeks its food not in such love or  
strife

As fill men's hearts with passionate hours  
and rest.

From no loved lips and on no loving  
breast

Have I sought ever for such gifts as bring  
Comfort, to stay the secret soul with  
sleep.

The joys, the loves, the labors, whence  
men reap

Rathe fruit of hopes and fears,  
I have made not mine; the best of all my  
days

Have been as those fair fruitless summer  
strays,

Those water-waifs that but the sea-wind  
steers,

Flakes of glad foam or flowers on footless  
ways

That take the wind in season and the  
sun,

And when the wind wills is their season  
done.

For all my days as all thy days from  
birth

My heart as thy heart was in me as thee,  
Fire; and not all the fountains of the sea

Have waves enough to quench it, nor on  
earth

Is fuel enough to feed,  
While day sows night, and night sows day

for seed.

We were not marked for sorrow, thou  
nor I,

For joy nor sorrow, sister, were we made,  
To take delight and grief to live and die,

Assuaged by pleasures or by pains af-  
frayed

That melt men's hearts and alter; we  
 retain  
 A memory mastering pleasure and all  
 pain,  
 A spirit within the sense of ear and eye,  
 A soul behind the soul, that seeks and  
 sings  
 And makes our life move only with its  
 wings  
 And feed but from its lips, that in return  
 Feed of our hearts wherein the old fires  
 that burn  
 Have strength not to consume  
 Nor glory enough to exalt us past our  
 doom.

*Ah, ah, the doom* (thou knowest whence  
 rang that wail)

*Of the shrill nightingale!*

(From whose wild lips, thou knowest, that  
 wail was thrown)

*For round about her have the great gods cast  
 A wing-borne body, and clothed her close and  
 fast*

*With a sweet life that hath no part in moan.  
 But me, for me* (how hadst thou heart to  
 hear?)

*Remains a sundering with the two-edged  
 spear.*

*Ah, for her doom!* so cried in presage then  
 The bodeful bonds slave of the king of  
 men,

And might not win her will.  
 Too close the entangling dragnet woven  
 of crime,

The snare of ill new-born of elder ill.  
 The curse of new time for an elder time,  
 Had caught and held her yet,  
 Enmeshed intolerably in the intolerant  
 net,

Who thought with craft to mock the  
 God most high,

And win by wiles his crown of prophecy  
 From the sun's hand sublime,  
 As God were man, to spare or to forget.

But thou, — the gods have given thee and  
 forgiven thee

More than our master gave  
 That strange-eyed, spirit-wounded,  
 strange-tongued slave

There questing houndlike where the  
 roofs red-wet

Reeked as a wet red grave.

Life everlasting has their strange grace  
 given thee,

Even hers whom thou wast wont to sing  
 and serve

With eyes, but not with song, too swift  
 to swerve;

Yet might not even thine eyes estranged  
 estrange her,

Who seeing thee too, but inly, burn and  
 bleed

Like that pale princess-priest of Priam's  
 seed,

For stranger service gave thee guerdon,  
 stranger

If this indeed be guerdon, this indeed

Her mercy, this thy meed —

That thou, being more than all we born,  
 being higher

Than all heads crowned of him that only  
 gives

The light whereby man lives,

The bay that bids man moved of God's  
 desire

Lay hand on lute or lyre,  
 Set lip to trumpet or deflowered green  
 reed —

If this were given thee for a grace indeed,  
 That thou, being first of all these, thou  
 alone

Shouldst have the grace to die not, but  
 to live,

And loose nor change one pulse of song,  
 one tone

Of all that were thy lady's and thine own,  
 The lady's whom thou criest on to for-  
 give,

Thou, priest and sacrifice on the altar-  
 stone

Where none may worship not of all that  
 live,

Love's priestess, errant on dark ways  
 diverse;

If this were grace indeed for Love to  
 give,

If this indeed were blessing and no curse.

Love's priestess, mad with pain and joy  
 of song,

Song's priestess, mad with joy and pain  
 of love,

Name above all names that are lights  
 above,

We have lov'd, prais'd, pitied, crown'd,  
 and done thee wrong,

O thou past praise and pity; thou the  
 sole

Utterly deathless, perfect only and whole  
 Immortal, body and soul.

For over all whom time hath overpast  
 The shadow of sleep inexorable is cast,  
 The implacable sweet shadow of perfect  
 sleep  
 That gives not back what life gives death  
 to keep;  
 Yea, all that liv'd and lov'd and sang and  
 sinn'd  
 Are all borne down death's cold, sweet,  
 soundless wind  
 That blows all night and knows not whom  
 its breath,  
 Darkling, may touch to death:  
 But one that wind hath touch'd and  
 changed not, — one  
 Whose body and soul are parcel of the  
 sun;  
 One that earth's fire could burn not, nor  
 the sea  
 Quench; nor might human doom take  
 hold on thee;  
 All praise, all pity, all dreams have done  
 thee wrong,  
 All love, with eyes love-blinded from  
 above;  
 Song's priestess, mad with joy and pain  
 of love,  
 Love's priestess, mad with pain and joy  
 song.  
 Hast thou none other answer then for  
 me  
 Than the air may have of thee,  
 Or the earth's warm woodlands girdling  
 with green girth  
 Thy secret, sleepless, burning life on  
 earth,  
 Or even the sea that once, being woman  
 crown'd  
 And girt with fire and glory of anguish  
 round,  
 Thou wert so fain to seek to, fain to crave  
 If she would hear thee and save  
 And give thee comfort of thy great green  
 grave?  
 Because I have known thee always who  
 thou art,  
 Thou knowest, have known thee to thy  
 heart's own heart,  
 Nor ever have given light ear to storied  
 song  
 That did thy sweet name sweet unwitting  
 wrong,  
 Nor ever have called thee nor would call  
 for shame,  
 Thou knowest, but inly, by thine only  
 name,

Sappho — because I have known thee  
 and loved, hast thou  
 None other answer now?  
 As brother and sister were we, child and  
 bird,  
 Since thy first Lesbian word  
 Flamed on me, and I knew not whence I  
 knew  
 This was the song that struck my whole  
 soul through,  
 Pierced my keen spirit of sense with edge  
 more keen,  
 Even when I knew not — even ere sooth  
 was seen —  
 When thou wast but the tawny sweet  
 winged thing  
 Whose cry was but of spring.

And yet even so thine ear should hear  
 me — yea,  
 Hear me this nightfall by this northland  
 bay,  
 Even for their sake whose loud good word  
 I had,  
 Singing of thee in the all-beloved clime  
 Once, where the windy wine of spring  
 makes mad  
 Our sisters of Majano, who kept time  
 Clear to my choral rhyme.  
 Yet was the song acclaimed of these aloud  
 Whose praise had made mute humble-  
 ness misproud,  
 The song with answering song applauded  
 thus,  
 But of that Daulian dream of Itylus.  
 So but for love's love haply was it — nay,  
 How else? — that even their song took  
 my song's part,  
 For love of love and sweetness of sweet  
 heart,  
 Or god-given glorious madness of mid May  
 And heat of heart and hunger and thirst  
 to sing,  
 Full of the new wine of the wind of spring.

Or if this were not, and it be not sin  
 To hold myself in spirit of thy sweet kin,  
 In heart and spirit of song;  
 If this my great love do thy grace no wrong,  
 Thy grace that gave me grace to dwell  
 therein;  
 If thy gods thus be my gods, and their will  
 Made my song part of thy song — even  
 such part  
 As man's hath of God's heart —  
 And my life like as thy life to fulfil;



What have our gods then given us?  
Ah, to thee,

Sister, much more, much happier than  
to me,

Much happier things they have given,  
and more of grace

Than falls to man's light race;  
For lighter are we, all our love and pain  
Lighter than thine, who knowest of time  
or place

Thus much, that place nor time  
Can heal or hurt or lull or change again  
The singing soul that makes his soul  
sublime

Who hears the far fall of its fire-fledged  
rhyme

Fill darkness as with bright and burning  
rain,

Till all the live gloom inly glows, and  
light

Seems with the sound to cleave the core  
of night.

The singing soul that moves thee, and  
that moved

When thou wast woman, and their songs  
divine

Who mixed for Grecian mouths heaven's  
lyric wine

Fell dumb, fell down reprov'd  
Before one sovereign Lesbian song of  
thine.

That soul, though love and life had fain  
held fast,

Wind-wiped with fiery music, rose and  
past

Through the indrawn hollow of earth and  
heaven and hell,

As through some straight sea-shell  
The wide sea's immemorial song, — the  
sca

That sings and breathes in strange men's  
ears of thee

How in her barren bride bed, void and  
vast,

Even thy soul sang itself to sleep at last.

To sleep? Ah, then, what song is this,  
that here

Makes all the night one ear,  
One ear fulfilled and mad with music,  
one

Heart kindling as the heart of heaven, to  
hear

A song more fiery than the awakening  
sun

Sings, when his song sets fire  
To the air and clouds that build the dead  
night's pyre?

*O thou of divers-colored mind, O thou  
Deathless, God's daughter, subtle-souled*  
— lo, now,

Now to the song above all songs, in flight  
Higher than the day-star's height,  
And sweet as sound the moving wings  
of night!

*Thou of the divers-colored seat — behold,  
Her very song of old! —*

*O deathless, O God's daughter, subtle-soul'd!*  
That same cry through this boskage  
overhead

Rings round reiterated,  
Palpitates as the last palpitated,  
The last that panted through her lips  
and died

Not down this gray north sea's half  
sapped cliff-side

That crumbles toward the coastline, year  
by year

More near the sands and near;  
The last loud lyric fiery cry she cried,  
Heard once on heights Leucadian, —  
heard not here.

Not here; for this that fires our north-  
land night,

This is the song that made  
Love fearful, even the heart of love afraid,  
With the great anguish of its great delight.  
No swan-song, no far-fluttering half-  
drawn breath,

No word that love of love's sweet nature  
saith,

No dirge that lulls the narrowing lids of  
death,

No healing hymn of peace-prevented  
strife, —

This is her song of life.

*I loved thee, — hark, one tenderer note  
than all —*

*Atthis, of old time, once — one low long  
fall,*

Sighing — one low low lovely loveless  
call,

Dying — one pause in song so flamelike  
fast —

*Atthis, long since in old time overpast —*  
One soft first pause and last,  
One, — then the old rage of rapture's  
fieriest rain

Storms all the music-maddened night  
again.

*Child of God, close craftswoman, I beseech thee*

*Bid not ache nor agony break nor master, Lady, my spirit —*

O thou her mistress, might her cry not reach thee?

Our Lady of all men's loves, could Love go past her,

Pass, and not hear it?

She hears not as she heard not: hears not me,

O trebled-natured mystery — how should she

Hear, or give ear? — who heard and heard not thee;

Heard and went past, and heard not; but all time

Hears all that all the ravin of his years Hath cast not wholly out of all men's ears

And dulled to death with deep dense funeral chime

Of their reiterate rhyme.

And now of all songs uttering all her praise,

All hers who had thy praise and did thee wrong,

Abides one song yet of her lyric days,

Thine only, this thy song.

O soul triune, woman and god and bird, Man, man at least has heard.

All ages call thee conqueror, and thy cry

The mightiest as the least beneath the sky

Whose heart was ever set to song, or stirred

With wind of mounting music blown more high

Than wildest wing may fly,

Hath heard or hears, — even Æschylus as I.

But when thy name was woman, and thy word

Human, — then haply, surely then me-seems

This thy bird's note was heard on earth of none,

Of none save only in dreams.

In all the world then surely was but one Song; as in heaven at highest one

sceptred sun

Regent, on earth here surely without fail

One only, one imperious nightingale.

Dumb was the field, the woodland mute, the lawn

Silent; the hill was tongueless as the vale

Even when the last fair waif of cloud that felt

Its heart beneath the coloring moonrays melt,

At high midnoon of midnight half withdrawn,

Bared all the sudden deep divine moon-dawn.

Then, unsaluted by her twin-born tune, That latter timeless morning of the moon

Rose past its hour of moonrise; clouds gave way

To the old reconquering ray,

But no song answering made it more than day;

No cry of song by night

Shot fire into the cloud-constraining light.

One only, one Æolian island heard

Thrill, but through no bird's throat,

In one strange manlike maiden's godlike note,

The song of all these as a single bird;

Till the sea's portal was as funeral gate

For that sole singer in all time's ageless date

Singled and signed for so triumphal fate,

All nightingales but one in all the world

All her sweet life were silent; only then,

When her life's wing of womanhood was furred,

Their cry, this cry of thine was heard again,

As of me now, of any born of men.

Through sleepless clear spring nights filled full of thee,

Rekindled here, thy ruling song has thrilled

The deep dark air and subtle tender sea

And breathless hearts with one bright sound fulfilled.

Or at midnoon to me

Swimming, and birds about my happier head

Skimming, one smooth soft way by water and air,

To these my bright born brethren and to me

Hath not the clear wind borne or seemed to bear

A song wherein all earth and heaven and sea

Were molten in one music made of thee  
To enforce us, O our sister of the shore,  
Look once in heart back landward and  
adore?

For songless were we seamews, yet had  
we

More joy than all things joyful of thee —  
more,

Haply, than all things happiest; nay,  
save thee,

In thy strong rapture of imperious joy  
Too high for heart of sea-borne bird or  
boy,

What living things were happiest if not  
we?

But knowing not love nor change nor  
wrath nor wrong,

No more we knew of song.

Song, and the secrets of it, and their  
might,

What blessings curse it and what curses  
bless,

I know them since my spirit had first in  
sight,

Clear as thy song's words or the live sun's  
light,

The small dark body's Lesbian loveliness  
That held the fire eternal; eye and ear

Were as a god's to see, a god's to hear,  
Through all his hours of daily and nightly

chime,  
The sundering of the two-edged spear of  
time;

The spear that pierces even the seven-  
fold shields

Of mightiest Memory, mother of all songs  
made,

And wastes all songs as roseleaves kissed  
and frayed

As here the harvest of the foam-flowered  
fields;

But thine the spear may waste not that he  
wields

Since first the God whose soul is man's  
live breath,

The sun whose face hath our sun's face  
for shade,

Put all the light of life and love and  
death

Too strong for life, but not for love too  
strong,

Where pain makes peace with pleasure  
in thy song,

And in thine heart, where love and song  
make strife,

Fire everlasting of eternal life. 1880.

## ON THE DEATHS OF THOMAS CARLYLE AND GEORGE ELIOT

Two souls diverse out of our human sight  
Pass, followed one with love and each with  
wonder:

The stormy sophist with his mouth of  
thunder,

Clothed with loud words and mantled in  
the might

Of darkness and magnificence of night;  
And one whose eye could smite the night

in sunder,  
Searching if light or no light were there-  
under,

And found in love of loving-kindness light.  
Duty divine and Thought with eyes of  
fire

Still following Righteousness with deep  
desire

Shone sole and stern before her and  
above —

Sure stars and sole to steer by; but more  
sweet

Shone lower the loveliest lamp for earthly  
feet, —

The light of little children, and their love.  
April, 1881.

## SONG FROM MARY STUART

AND ye maun braid your yellow hair,  
And busk ye like a bride;

Wi' sevenscore men to bring ye hame,  
And ae true love beside:

Between the birk and the green rowan  
Fu' blithely shall ye ride.

O ye maun braid my yellow hair,  
But braid it like nae bride;

And I maun gang my ways, mither,  
Wi' nae true love beside;

Between the kirk and the kirkyard  
Fu' sadly shall I ride. 1881.

## HOPE AND FEAR

BENEATH the shadow of dawn's aerial  
cope,

With eyes enkindled as the sun's own  
sphere,

Hope from the front of youth in godlike  
cheer

Looks Godward, past the shades where  
blind men grope

Round the dark door that prayers nor  
 dreams can ope,  
 And makes for joy the very darkness dear  
 That gives her wide wings play; nor  
 dreams that fear  
 At noon may rise and pierce the heart of  
 hope.  
 Then, when the soul leaves off to dream  
 and yearn,  
 May truth first purge her eyesight to discern  
 What once being known leaves time no  
 power to appal;  
 Till youth at last, ere yet youth be not,  
 learn  
 The kind wise word that falls from years  
 that fall —  
 "Hope thou not much, and fear thou  
 not at all." 1882.

## WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Not if men's tongues and angels' all in  
 one  
 Spake the word be said that might  
 speak Thee.  
 Streams, winds, woods, flowers, fields,  
 mountains, yea, the sea,  
 What power is in them all to praise the  
 sun?  
 His praise is this, — he can be praised of  
 none.  
 Man, woman, child, praise God for him;  
 but he  
 Exults not to be worshipped, but to be.  
 He is; and, being, beholds his work well  
 done.  
 All joy, all glory, all sorrow, all strength,  
 all mirth,  
 Are his: without him, day were night on  
 earth.  
 Time knows not his from time's own  
 period.  
 All lutes, all harps, all viols, all flutes,  
 all lyres,  
 Fall dumb before him ere one string  
 suspires.  
 All stars are angels; but the sun is God.  
 1882.

## CHILDREN

Of such is the kingdom of heaven.  
 No glory that ever was shed  
 From the crowning star of the seven  
 That crown the north world's head,

No word that ever was spoken  
 Of human or godlike tongue,  
 Gave ever such godlike token  
 Since human harps were strung.

No sign that ever was given  
 To faithful or faithless eyes  
 Showed ever beyond clouds riven  
 So clear a Paradise.

Earth's creeds may be seventy times seven  
 And blood have defiled each creed:  
 If of such be the kingdom of heaven,  
 It must be heaven indeed. 1882.

## A CHILD'S LAUGHTER

ALL the bells of heaven may ring,  
 All the birds of heaven may sing,  
 All the wells on earth may spring,  
 All the winds on earth may bring  
 All sweet sounds together;  
 Sweeter far than all things heard,  
 Hand of harper, tone of bird,  
 Sound of woods at sundawn stirr'd,  
 Welling water's winsome word,  
 Wind in warm wan weather,

One thing yet there is, that none  
 Hearing ere its chime be done  
 Knows not well the sweetest one  
 Heard of man beneath the sun,  
 Hoped in heaven hereafter;  
 Soft and strong and loud and light,  
 Very sound of very light  
 Heard from morning's rosiest height,  
 When the soul of all delight  
 Fills a child's clear laughter.

Golden bells of welcome roll'd  
 Never forth such notes, nor told  
 Hours so blithe in tones so bold,  
 As the radiant mouth of gold  
 Here that rings forth heaven.  
 If the golden-crested wren  
 Were a nightingale — why, then  
 Something seen and heard of men  
 Might be half as sweet as when  
 Laughs a child of seven. 1882.

## THE SALT OF THE EARTH

If childhood were not in the world;  
 But only men and women grown,  
 No baby-locks in tendrils curled,  
 No baby-blossoms blown;

Though men were stronger, women fairer,  
And nearer all delights in reach,  
And verse and music uttered rarer  
Tones of more godlike speech;

Though the utmost life of life's best hours  
Found, as it cannot now find, words;  
Though desert sands were sweet as  
flowers  
And flowers could sing like birds,

But children never heard them, never  
They felt a child's foot leap and run:  
This were a drearier star than ever  
Yet looked upon the sun. 1882.

### CHILD AND POET

You send me your love in a letter,  
I send you my love in a song:  
Ah child, your gift is the better,  
Mine does you but wrong.

No fame, were the best less brittle,  
No praise, were it wide as earth,  
Is worth so much as a little  
Child's love may be worth.

We see the children above us  
As they might angels above:  
Come back to us, child, if you love us,  
And bring us your love. 1882.

### A CHILD'S FUTURE

WHAT will it please you, my darling, here-  
after to be?  
Fame upon land will you look for, or  
glory by sea?  
Gallant your life will be always, and all  
of it free.

Free as the wind when the heart of the  
twilight is stirred  
Eastward, and sounds from the springs  
of the sunrise are heard:  
Free — and we know not another as in-  
finite word.

Darkness or twilight or sunlight may  
compass us round,  
Hate may arise up against us, or hope  
may confound;  
Love may forsake us; yet may not the  
spirit be bound.

Free in oppression of grief as in ardor of  
joy.

Still may the soul be, and each to her  
strength as a toy:

Free in the glance of the man as the smile  
of the boy.

Freedom alone is the salt and the spirit  
that gives  
Life, and without her is nothing that  
verily lives:

Death cannot slay her: she laughs upon  
death and forgives.

Brightest and hardiest of roses anear and  
afar

Glitters the blithe little face of you, round  
as a star:

Liberty bless you and keep you to be as  
you are.

England and liberty bless you and keep  
you to be

Worthy the name of their child and the  
sight of their sea;

Fear not at all; for a slave, if he fears not,  
is free. 1882.

### ÉTUDE RÉALISTE

#### I

A BABY'S feet, like sea-shells pink,  
Might tempt, should Heaven see meet,  
An angel's lips to kiss, we think,  
A baby's feet.

Like rose-hued sea-flowers toward the heat  
They stretch and spread and wink  
Their ten soft buds that part and meet.

No flower-bells that expand and shrink  
Gleam half so heavenly sweet  
As shine on life's untrodden brink  
A baby's feet.

#### II

A baby's hands, like rosebuds furl'd,  
Whence yet no leaf expands,  
Ope if you touch, though close upcurl'd  
A baby's hands.

Then, even as warriors grip their brands  
When battle's bolt is hurl'd,  
They close, clench'd hard like tightening  
bands.



No rosebuds yet by dawn impearled  
 Match, even in loveliest lands,  
 The sweetest flowers in all the world —  
 A baby's hands.

III

A baby's eyes, ere speech begin,  
 Ere lips learn words or sighs,  
 Bless all things bright enough to win  
 A baby's eyes.

Love, while the sweet thing laughs and  
 lies,  
 And sleep flows out and in,  
 Lies perfect in them Paradise.

Their glance might cast out pain and sin,  
 Their speech make dumb the wise,  
 By mute glad godhead felt within  
 A baby's eyes. 1883.

IN GUERNSEY

(TO THEODORE WATTS)

I

THE heavenly bay, ringed round with  
 cliffs and moors,  
 Storm-stained ravines, and crags that  
 lawns inlay,  
 Soothes as with love the rocks whose  
 guard secures  
 The heavenly bay.

O friend, shall time take even this away,  
 This blessing given of beauty that en-  
 dures,

This glory shown us, not to pass but stay?

Though sight be changed for memory,  
 love ensures

What memory, changed by love to sight,  
 would say —

The word that seals for ever mine and  
 yours,  
 The heavenly bay.

II

My mother sea, my fortress, what new  
 strand,

What new delight of waters, may this be,  
 The fairest found since time's first breezes  
 fanned

My mother sea?

Once more I give my body and soul to  
 thee,

Who hast my soul for ever: cliff and  
 sand

Recede, and heart to heart once more  
 are we.

My heart springs first and plunges, ere  
 my hand

Strike out from shore: more close it  
 brings to me,

More near and dear than seems my  
 fatherland,

My mother sea.

III

Across and along, as the bay's breadth  
 opens, and o'er us

Wild autumn exults in the wind, swift  
 rapture and strong

Impels us, and broader the wide waves  
 brighten before us

Across and along.

The whole world's heart is uplifted, and  
 knows not wrong;

The whole world's life is a chant to the  
 sea-tide's chorus;

Are we not as waves of the water, as notes  
 of the song?

Like children unworn of the passions and  
 toils that wore us,

We breast for a season the breadth of the  
 seas that throng,

Rejoicing as they, to be borne as of old  
 they bore us

Across and along. 1883.

A SINGING LESSON

FAR-FETCHED and dear bought, as the  
 proverb rehearses,

Is good, or was held so, for ladies; but  
 nought

In a song can be good if the turn of the  
 verse is

Far-fetched and dear bought.

As the turn of a wave should it sound,  
 and the thought

Ring smooth, and as light as the spray  
 that disperses

Be the gleam of the words for the garb  
 thereof wrought.

Let the soul in it shine through the sound  
 as it pierces  
 Men's hearts with possession of music  
 unsought;  
 For the bounties of song are no jealous  
 god's mercies,  
 Far-fetched and dear bought.

1883.

## THE ROUNDEL

A ROUNDEL is wrought as a ring or a star-  
 bright sphere,  
 With craft of delight and with cunning of  
 sound unsought,  
 That the heart of the hearer may smile  
 if to pleasure his ear  
 A roundel is wrought.

Its jewel of music is carven of all or of  
 aught —  
 Love, laughter, or mourning — remem-  
 brance of rapture or fear —  
 That fancy may fashion to hang in the  
 ear of thought.

As a bird's quick song runs round, and  
 the hearts in us hear —  
 Pause answers to pause, and again the  
 same strain caught,  
 So moves the device whence, round as a  
 pearl or tear,  
 A roundel is wrought.

1883.

## A SOLITUDE

SEA beyond sea, sand after sweep of  
 sand,  
 Here ivory smooth, here cloven and ridged  
 with flow  
 Of channelled waters soft as rain or  
 snow,  
 Stretch their lone length at ease beneath  
 the bland  
 Gray gleam of skies whose smile on wave  
 and strand  
 Shines weary like a man's who smiles to  
 know  
 That now no dream can mock his faith  
 with show,  
 Nor cloud for him seem living sea or land.  
 Is there an end at all of all this waste,  
 These crumbling cliffs defeatured and  
 defaced,

These ruinous heights of sea-sapped walls  
 that slide  
 Seaward with all their banks of bleak  
 blown flowers  
 Glad yet of life, ere yet their hope subside  
 Beneath the coil of dull dense waves and  
 hours?  
 June, 1884.

## ON A COUNTRY ROAD

ALONG these low pleached lanes, on such  
 a day,  
 So soft a day as this, through shade and  
 sun,  
 With glad grave eyes that scanned the  
 glad wild way  
 And heart still hovering o'er a song begun,  
 And smile that warmed the world with  
 benison,  
 Our father, lord long since of lordly  
 rhyme,  
 Long since hath haply ridden, when the  
 lime  
 Bloomed broad above him, flowering  
 where he came.  
 Because thy passage once made warm  
 this clime,  
 Our father Chaucer, here we praise thy  
 name.

Each year that England clothes herself  
 with May,  
 She takes thy likeness on her. Time hath  
 spun  
 Fresh raiment all in vain and strange  
 array  
 For earth and man's new spirit, fain to  
 shun  
 Things past for dreams of better to be  
 won,  
 Through many a century since thy funeral  
 chime  
 Rang, and men deemed it death's most  
 direful crime  
 To have spared not thee for very love or  
 shame;  
 And yet, while mists round last year's  
 memories climb,  
 Our father Chaucer, here we praise thy  
 name.

Each turn of the old wild road whereon we  
 stray,  
 Meseems, might bring us face to face  
 with one

Whom seeing we could not but give  
thanks, and pray

For England's love our father and her son  
To speak with us as once in days long done  
With all men, sage and churl and monk  
and mime,

Who knew not as we know the soul sub-  
lime

That sang for song's love more than lust  
of fame.

Yet, though this be not, yet, in happy  
time,

Our father Chaucer, here we praise thy  
name.

Friend, even as bees about the flowering  
thyme,

Years crowd on years, till hoar decay  
begrime

Names once beloved; but seeing the sun  
the same,

As birds of autumn fain to praise the  
prime,

Our father Chaucer, here we praise thy  
name.  
June, 1884.

### THE SEABOARD

THE sea is at ebb, and the sound of her  
utmost word

Is soft as the least wave's lapse in a still  
small reach.

From bay unto bay, on quest of a goal  
deferred,

From headland ever to headland and  
breach to breach

Where earth gives ear to the message  
that all days preach

With changes of gladness and sadness  
that cheer and chide,

The lone way lures me along by a chance  
untried

That haply, if hope dissolved not and  
faith be whole,

Not all for nought shall I seek, with a  
dream for guide,

The goal that is not, and ever again the  
goal.

The trackless ways are untravelled of  
sail or bird;

The hoar wave hardly recedes from the  
soundless beach.

The silence of instant noon goes nigh to be  
heard,

The viewless void to be visible: all and  
each,

A closure of calm no clamor of storm can  
breach

Concludes and confines and absorbs them  
on either side,

All forces of light and of life and the live  
world's pride.

Sands hardly ruffled of ripples that hardly  
roll

Seem ever to show as in reach of a swift  
brief stride

The goal that is not, and ever again the  
goal.

The waves are a joy to the seamew, the  
meads to the herd,

And a joy to the heart is a goal that it  
may not reach.

No sense that for ever the limits of sense  
engird,

No hearing or sight that is vassal to form  
or speech,

Learns ever the secret that shadow and  
silence teach,

Hears ever the notes that or ever they  
swell subside,

Sees ever the light that lights not the  
loud world's tide,

Clasps ever the cause of the lifelong  
scheme's control

Wherethrough we pursue, till the waters  
of life be dried,

The goal that is not, and ever again the  
goal.

Friend, what have we sought or seek we,  
whate'er betide,

Though the seaboard shift its mark from  
afar descried,

But aims whence ever anew shall arise the  
soul?

Love, thought, song, life, but show for a  
glimpse and hide

The goal that is not, and ever again the  
goal.  
1884.

### THE CLIFFSIDE PATH

SEAWARD goes the sun, and homeward by  
the down

We, before the night upon his grave be  
sealed.

Low behind us lies the bright steep mur-  
muring town,

High before us heaves the steep rough  
silent field.

Breach by ghastlier breach, the cliffs  
collapsing yield :

Half the path is broken, half the banks  
divide ;

Flawed and crumbled, riven and rent,  
they cleave and slide

Toward the ridged and wrinkled waste of  
girdling sand

Deep beneath, whose furrows tell how far  
and wide

Wind is lord and change is sovereign of  
the strand.

Star by star on the unsunned waters  
twirling down,

Golden spear-points glance against a  
silver shield.

Over banks and bents, across the head-  
land's crown,

As by pulse of gradual plumes through  
twilight wheeled,

Soft as sleep, the waking wind awakes the  
weald.

Moor and copse and fallow, near or far  
descried,

Feel the mild wings move, and gladden  
where they glide :

Silence uttering love that all things un-  
derstand,

Bids the quiet fields forget that hard beside  
Wind is lord and change is sovereign of  
the strand.

Yet may sight, ere all the hoar soft shade  
grow brown,

Hardly reckon half the rifts and rents un-  
healed

Where the scarred cliffs downward  
sundering drive and drown,

Hewn as if with stroke of swords in  
tempest steeled,

Wielded as the night's will and the wind's  
may wield.

Crowned and zoned in vain with flowers  
of autumn-tide,

Life and love seek harborage on the land-  
ward side ;

Wind is lord and change is sovereign of  
the strand.

Friend, though man be less than these,  
for all his pride,

Yet, for all his weakness, shall not hope  
abide ?

Wind and change can wreck but life and  
waste but land :

Truth and trust are sure, though here till  
all subside

Wind is lord and change is sovereign of the  
strand. 1884.

## IN THE WATER

THE sea is awake, and the sound of the  
song of the joy of her waking is rolled

From afar to the star that recedes, from  
anear to the wastes of the wild wide  
shore.

Her call is a trumpet compelling us home-  
ward : if dawn in her east be acold,  
From the sea shall we crave not her grace  
to rekindle the life that it kindled  
before,

Her breath to requicken, her bosom to  
rock us, her kisses to bless as of  
yore ?

For the wind, with his wings half open,  
at pause in the sky, neither fettered  
nor free,

Leans waveward and flutters the ripple  
to laughter : and fain would the twain  
of us be

Where lightly the wave yearns forward  
from under the curve of the deep dawn's  
dome,

And, full of the morning and fired with  
the pride of the glory thereof and the  
glee,

Strike out from the shore as the heart in  
us bids and beseeches, athirst for the  
foam.

Life holds not an hour that is better to  
live in : the past is a tale that is told,

The future a sun-flecked shadow, alive  
and asleep, with a blessing in store.

As we give us again to the waters, the  
rapture of limbs that the waters enfold

Is less than the rapture of spirit whereby,  
though the burden it quits were sore,

Our souls and the bodies they wield at  
their will are absorbed in the life they  
adore —

In the life that endures no burden, and  
bows not the forehead, and bends not  
the knee —

In the life everlasting of earth and of  
heaven, in the laws that atone and  
agree,

In the measureless music of things, in the  
fervor of forces that rest or that roam,  
That cross and return and reissue, as I  
after you and as you after me  
Strike out from the shore as the heart in  
us bids and beseeches, athirst for the  
foam.

For, albeit he were less than the least of  
them, haply the heart of a man may  
be bold

To rejoice in the word of the sea, as a  
mother's that saith to the son she bore,  
"Child, was not the life in thee mine,  
and my spirit the breath in thy lips  
from of old?"

Have I let not thy weakness exult in my  
strength, and thy foolishness learn of  
my lore?

Have I helped not or healed not thine  
anguish, or made not the might of thy  
gladness more?"

And surely his heart should answer, "The  
light of the love of my life is in thee."  
She is fairer than earth, and the sun is not  
fairer, the wind in not blither than she:  
From my youth hath she shown me the  
joy of her bays that I crossed, of her  
cliffs that I clomb,

Till now that the twain of us here, in  
desire of the dawn and in trust of the  
sea,

Strike out from the shore as the heart in  
us bids and beseeches, athirst for the  
foam.

Friend, earth is a harbor of refuge for  
winter, a covert whereunder to flee

When day is the vassal of night, and the  
strength of the hosts of her mightier  
than he;

But here is the presence adored of me,  
here my desire is at rest and at home.  
There are cliffs to be climbed upon land,  
there are ways to be trodden and rid-  
den: but we

Strike out from the shore as the heart  
in us bids and beseeches, athirst for  
the foam. 1884.

## THE SUNBOWS

SPRAY of song that springs in April, light  
of love that laughs through May,  
Live and die and live for ever: nought  
of all things far less fair

Keeps a surer life than these that seem  
to pass like fire away.

In the souls they live which are but all  
the brighter that they were;  
In the hearts that kindle, thinking what  
delight of old was there.

Wind that shapes and lifts and shifts  
them bids perpetual memory play  
Over dreams and in and out of deeds and  
thoughts which seem to wear  
Light that leaps and runs and revels  
through the springing flames of spray.

Dawn is wild upon the waters where we  
drink of dawn to-day:

Wide, from wave to wave rekindling in  
rebound through radiant air,  
Flash the fires unweaved and woven again  
of wind that works in play,

Working wonders more than heart may  
note or sight may wellnigh dare,  
Wefts of rarer light than colors rain from  
heaven, though this be rare.

Arch on arch unbuilt in building, reared  
and ruined ray by ray,

Breaks and brightens, laughs and lessens,  
even till eyes may hardly bear

Light that leaps and runs and revels  
through the springing flames of spray.

Year on year sheds light and music  
rolled and flashed from bay to bay

Round the summer capes of time and  
winter headlands keen and bare

Whence the soul keeps watch, and bids  
her vassal memory watch and pray,

If perchance the dawn may quicken, or  
perchance the midnight spare.

Silence quells not music, darkness takes  
not sunlight in her snare;

Shall not joys endure that perish? Yea,  
saith dawn, though night say nay:

Life on life goes out, but very life en-  
kindles everywhere

Light that leaps and runs and revels  
through the springing flames of spray.

Friend, were life no more than this is,  
well would yet the living fare.

All aflower and all afire and all flung  
heavenward, who shall say

Such a flash of life were worthless? This  
is worth a world of care —

Light that leaps and runs and revels  
through the springing flames of spray.

1884.



## ON THE VERGE

HERE begins the sea that ends not till the  
 world's end. Where we stand,  
 Could we know the next high sea-mark  
 set beyond these waves that gleam,  
 We should know what never man hath  
 known, nor eye of man hath scanned.  
 Nought beyond these coiling clouds that  
 melt like fume of shrines that steam  
 Breaks or stays the strength of waters till  
 they pass our bounds of dream.  
 Where the waste Land's End leans west-  
 ward, all the seas it watches roll  
 Find their border fixed beyond them, and  
 a worldwide shore's control:  
 These whereby we stand, no shore beyond  
 us limits: these are free.  
 Gazing hence, we see the water that grows  
 iron round the Pole,  
 From the shore that hath no shore beyond  
 it set in all the sea.

Sail on sail along the sea-line fades and  
 flashes; here on land  
 Flash and fade the wheeling wings on  
 wings of mews that plunge and scream.  
 Hour on hour along the line of life and  
 time's evasive strand  
 Shines and darkens, wanes and waxes,  
 slays and dies: and scarce they seem  
 More than motes that thronged and  
 trembled in the brief noon's breath and  
 beam.  
 Some with crying and wailing, some with  
 notes like sound of bells that toll,  
 Some with sighing and laughing, some  
 with words that blessed and made us  
 whole,  
 Passed, and left us, and we know not  
 what they were, nor what were we.  
 Would we know, being mortal? Never  
 breath of answering whisper stole  
 From the shore that hath no shore beyond  
 it set in all the sea.

Shadows, would we question darkness?  
 Ere our eyes and brows be fanned  
 Round with airs of twilight, washed with  
 dew from sleep's eternal stream,  
 Would we know sleep's guarded secret?  
 Ere the fire consume the brand,  
 Would it know if yet its ashes may re-  
 quicken? yet we deem  
 Surely man may know, or ever night  
 unyoke her starry team,

What the dawn shall be, or if the dawn  
 shall be not: yea, the scroll  
 Would we read of sleep's dark scripture,  
 pledge of peace or doom of dole.  
 Ah, but here man's heart leaps, yearning  
 toward the gloom with venturous glee,  
 Though his pilot eye behold nor bay nor  
 harbor, rock nor shoal,  
 From the shore that hath no shore beyond  
 it set in all the sea.

Friend, who knows if death indeed have  
 life or life have death for goal?  
 Day nor night can tell us, nor may seas  
 declare nor skies unroll  
 What has been from everlasting, or if  
 aught shall always be.  
 Silence answering only strikes response  
 reverberate on the soul  
 From the shore that hath no shore beyond  
 it set in all the sea. 1884.

ON THE MONUMENT ERECTED TO  
MAZZINI AT GENOA

ITALIA, mother of the souls of men,  
 Mother divine  
 Of all that serv'd thee best with sword  
 or pen,  
 All sons of thine,

Thou knowest that here the likeness of  
 the best  
 Before thee stands:  
 The head most high, the heart found  
 faithfulest,  
 The purest hands.

Above the fume and foam of time that flits,  
 The soul, we know,  
 Now sits on high where Alighieri sits  
 With Angelo.

Nor his own heavenly tongue nath heav-  
 enly speech  
 Enough to say  
 What this man was, whose praise no  
 thought may reach,  
 No words can weigh.

Since man's first mother brought to  
 mortal birth  
 Her first-born son,  
 Such grace befell not ever man on earth  
 As crowns this One

Of God nor man was ever this thing  
said:

That he could give  
Life back to her who gave him, that his  
dead  
Mother might live.

But this man found his mother dead and  
slain,

With fast-seal'd eyes,  
And bade the dead rise up and live again,  
And she did rise:

And all the world was bright with her  
through him:

But dark with strife,  
Like heaven's own sun that storming  
clouds bedim,  
Was all his life.

Life and the clouds are vanish'd; hate  
and fear

Have had their span  
Of time to hurt and are not: He is here,  
The sunlike man.

City superb, that hadst Columbus first  
For sovereign son,

Be prouder that thy breast hath later  
nursed  
This mightier One.

Glory be his for ever, while his land  
Lives and is free,

As with controlling breath and sovereign  
hand  
He bade her be.

Earth shows to heaven the names by  
thousands told

That crown her fame,  
But highest of all that heaven and earth  
behold,  
Mazzini's name. 1884.

## THE INTERPRETERS

### I

DAYS dawn on us that make amends for  
many

Sometimes,  
When heaven and earth seem sweeter  
even than any  
Man's rhymes.

Light had not all been quenched in  
France, or quelled

In Greece,  
Had Homer sung not, or had Hugo held  
His peace.

Had Sappho's self not left her word thus  
long

For token,  
The sea round Lesbos yet in waves of  
song  
Had spoken.

### II

And yet these days of subtler air and  
finer

Delight,  
When lovelier looks the darkness, and  
diviner  
The light —

The gift they give of all these golden hours,  
Whose urn

Pours forth reverberate rays or shadow-  
ing showers  
In turn —

Clouds, beams, and winds that make the  
live day's track

Seem living —  
What were they did no spirit give them  
back  
Thanksgiving?

### III

Dead air, dead fire, dead shapes and  
shadows, telling

Time nought;  
Man gives them sense and soul by song,  
and dwelling  
In thought.

In human thought their being endures,  
their power

Abides:  
Else were their life a thing that each  
light hour  
Derides.

The years live, work, sigh, smile, and die,  
with all

They cherish;  
The soul endures, though dreams that fed  
it fall  
And perish.

## IV

In human thought have all things habitation ;

Our days  
Laugh, lower, and lighten past, and find  
no station  
That stays.

But thought and faith are mightier things  
than time

Can wrong,  
Made splendid once with speech, or made  
sublime  
By song.

Remembrance, though the tide of change  
that rolls

Wax hoary,  
Gives earth and heaven, for song's sake  
and the soul's,  
Their glory. 1885.

## A WORD WITH THE WIND

LORD of days and nights that hear thy  
word of wintry warning,

Wind whose feet are set on ways that  
none may tread,

Change the nest wherein thy wings are  
fledged for flight by morning,

Change the harbor whence at dawn  
thy sails are spread.

Not the dawn, ere yet the imprisoning  
night has half released her,

More desires the sun's full face of cheer,  
than we,

Well as yet we love the strength of the  
iron-tongued north-easter,

Yearn for wind to meet us as we front  
the sea.

All thy ways are good, O wind, and all the  
world should fester,

Were thy fourfold godhead quenched,  
or stilled thy strife :

Yet the waves and we desire too long the  
deep south-wester,

Whence the waters quicken shoreward,  
clothed with life.

Yet the field not made for ploughing save  
of keels nor harrowing

Save of storm-winds lies unbrightened  
by thy breath :

Banded broad with ruddy samphire  
glow the sea-banks narrowing

Westward, while the sea gleams chill  
and still as death.

Sharp and strange from inland sounds  
thy bitter note of battle,  
Blown between grim skies and waters  
sullen-souled,

Till the baffled seas bear back, rocks roar  
and shingles rattle,

Vexed and angered and anhungered  
and acold.

Change thy note, and give the waves  
their will, and all the measure,

Full and perfect, of the music of their  
might,

Let it fill the bays with thunderous notes  
of pleasure,

Shake the shores with passion, sound  
at once and smite.

Sweet are even the mild low notes of  
wind and sea, but sweeter

Sounds the song whose choral wrath of  
raging rhyme

Bids the shelving shoals keep tune with  
storm's imperious metre,

Bids the rocks and reefs respond in  
rapturous chime.

Sweet the lisp and lulling whisper and  
luxurious laughter,

Soft as love or sleep, of waves whereon  
the sun

Dreams, and dreams not of the darkling  
hours before nor after,

Winged with cloud whose wrath shall  
bid love's day be done.

Yet shall darkness bring the awakening  
sea a lordlier lover,

Clothed with strength more amorous  
and more strenuous will,

Whence her heart of hearts shall kindle  
and her soul recover

Sense of love too keen to lie for love's  
sake still.

Let thy strong south-western music  
sound, and bid the billows

Brighten, proud and glad to feel thy  
scourge and kiss

Sting and soothe and sway them, bowed  
as aspens bend or willows,

Yet resurgent still in breathless rage of  
bliss.

All to-day the slow sleek ripples hardly  
bear up shore-ward,

Charged with sighs more light than  
laughter, faint and fair,

Like a woodland lake's weak wavelets  
lightly lingering forward,

Soft and listless as the slumber-stricken  
air.

Be the sunshine bared or veiled, the sky  
 superb or shrouded,  
 Still the waters, lax and languid, chafed  
 and foiled,  
 Keen and thwarted, pale and patient,  
 clothed with fire or clouded,  
 Vex their heart in vain, or sleep like  
 serpents coiled.  
 Thee they look for, blind and baffled,  
 wan with wrath and weary,  
 Blown for ever back by winds that  
 rock the bird:  
 Winds that seamews breast subdue the  
 sea, and bid the dreary  
 Waves be weak as hearts made sick  
 with hope deferred.  
 Let thy clarion sound from westward,  
 let the south bear token  
 How the glories of thy godhead sound  
 and shine:  
 Bid the land rejoice to see the land-wind's  
 broad wings broken,  
 Bid the sea take comfort, bid the  
 world be thine.  
 Half the world abhors thee beating back  
 the sea, and blackening  
 Heaven with fierce and woful change of  
 fluctuant form:  
 All the world acclaims thee shifting sail  
 again, and slackening  
 Cloud by cloud the close-reefed cordage  
 of the storm.  
 Sweeter fields and brighter woods and  
 lordlier hills than waken  
 Here at sunrise never hailed the sun  
 and thee:  
 Turn thee then, and give them comfort,  
 shed like rain and shaken  
 Far as foam that laughs and leaps  
 along the sea. 1889.

### IN TIME OF MOURNING

"RETURN," we dare not as we fain  
 Would cry from hearts that yearn:  
 Love dares not bid our dead again  
 Return.

O hearts that strain and burn  
 As fires fast fettered burn and strain!  
 Bow down, lie still, and learn.

The heart that healed all hearts of pain  
 No funeral rites inurn:  
 Its echoes, while the stars remain,  
 Return. May, 1885. 1889.

### A SEQUENCE OF SONNETS ON THE DEATH OF ROBERT BROWNING

THE clearest eyes in all the world they  
 read  
 With sense more keen and spirit of sight  
 more true  
 Than burns and thrills in sunrise, when  
 the dew  
 Flames, and absorbs the glory round it  
 shed,  
 As they the light of ages quick and dead,  
 Closed now, forsake us: yet the shaft  
 that slew  
 Can slay not one of all the works we  
 knew,  
 Nor death discrown that many-laurelled  
 head.  
 The works of words whose life seems  
 lightning wrought,  
 And moulded of unconquerable thought,  
 And quickened with imperishable flame,  
 Stand fast and shine and smile, assured  
 that nought  
 May fade of all their myriad-moulded  
 fame,  
 Nor England's memory clasp not Brown-  
 ing's name.

Death, what hast thou to do with one for  
 whom  
 Time is not lord, but servant? What  
 least part  
 Of all the fire that fed his living heart,  
 Of all the light more keen than sun-  
 dawn's bloom  
 That lit and led his spirit, strong as  
 doom  
 And bright as hope, can aught thy breath  
 may dart  
 Quench? Nay, thou knowest he knew  
 thee what thou art,  
 A shadow born of terror's barren womb,  
 That brings not forth save shadows.  
 What art thou,  
 To dream, albeit thou breathe upon his  
 brow,  
 That power on him is given thee, — that  
 thy breath  
 Can make him less than love acclaims  
 him now,  
 And hears all time sound back the word  
 it saith?  
 What part hast thou then in his glory,  
 Death?

But he — to him, who knows what gift is  
 thine,  
 Death? Hardly may we think or hope  
 when we  
 Pass likewise thither where to-night is he,  
 Beyond the irremeable outer seas that  
 shine  
 And darken round such dreams as half  
 divine  
 Some sunlit harbor in that starless sea  
 Where gleams no ship to windward or  
 to lee,  
 To read with him the secret of thy shrine.  
 There too, as here, may song, delight,  
 and love,  
 The nightingale, the sea-bird, and the  
 dove,  
 Fulfil with joy the splendor of the sky  
 Till all beneath wax bright as all above:  
 But none of all that search the heavens,  
 and try  
 The sun, may match the sovereign eagle's  
 eye.

Among the wondrous ways of men and  
 time  
 He went as one that ever found and  
 sought  
 And bore in hand the lamplike spirit of  
 thought  
 To illumine with instance of its fire sublime  
 The dusk of many a cloudlike age and  
 clime.  
 No spirit in shape of light and darkness  
 wrought,  
 No faith, no fear, no dream, no rapture,  
 nought  
 That blooms in wisdom, nought that  
 burns in crime,  
 No virtue girt and armed and helmed  
 with light,  
 No love more lovely than the snows are  
 white,  
 No serpent sleeping in some dead soul's  
 tomb,  
 No song-bird singing from some live  
 soul's height,  
 But he might hear, interpret, or illumine  
 With sense invasive as the dawn of  
 doom.

What secret thing of splendor or of shade  
 Surmised in all those wandering ways  
 wherein  
 Man, led of love and life and death and  
 sin,  
 Strays, climbs, or cowers, allured, ab-  
 sorbed, afraid,  
 Might not the strong and sunlike sense  
 invade  
 Of that full soul that had for aim to win  
 Light, silent over time's dark toil and  
 din,  
 Life, at whose touch death fades as dead  
 things fade?  
 O spirit of man, what mystery moves in  
 thee  
 That he might know not of in spirit, and  
 see  
 The heart within the heart that seems to  
 strive,  
 The life within the life that seems to be,  
 And hear through all thy storms that  
 whirl and drive,  
 The living sound of all men's souls alive?  
 He held no dream worth waking: so he  
 said,  
 He who stands now on death's triumphal  
 steep,  
 Awakened out of life wherein we sleep  
 And dream of what he knows and sees,  
 being dead.  
 But never death for him was dark or  
 dread:  
 "Look forth" he bade the soul, and fear  
 not. Weep,  
 All ye that trust not in his truth, and  
 keep  
 Vain memory's vision of a vanished head  
 As all that lives of all that once was he  
 Save that which lightens from his word:  
 but we,  
 Who, seeing the sunset-colored waters  
 roll,  
 Yet know the sun subdued not of the sea,  
 Nor weep nor doubt that still the spirit  
 is whole,  
 And life and death but shadows of the  
 soul.

January, 1890.



# DOBSON

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## DOBSON

### A DEAD LETTER

"*À cœur blessé — l'ombre et le silence.*"  
H. DE BALZAC.

#### I

I DREW it from its china tomb; —  
It came out feebly scented  
With some thin ghost of past perfume  
That dust and days had lent it.

An old, old letter, — folded still!  
To read with due composure,  
I sought the sun-lit window-sill,  
Above the gray enclosure,

That glimmering in the sultry haze,  
Faint-flowered, dimly shaded,  
Slumbered like Goldsmith's Madam  
Blaize,  
Bedizened and brocaded.

A queer old place! You'd surely say  
Some tea-board garden-maker  
Had planned it in Dutch William's day  
To please some florist Quaker,

So trim it was. The yew-trees still,  
With pious care perverted,  
Grew in the same grim shapes; and still  
The lipless dolphin spurted;

Still in his wonted state abode  
The broken-nosed Apollo;  
And still the cypress-arbor showed  
The same umbrageous hollow.

Only, — as fresh young Beauty gleams  
From coffee-colored laces, —  
So peeped from its old-fashioned dreams  
The fresher modern traces;

For idle mallet, hoop, and ball  
Upon the lawn were lying;  
A magazine, a tumbled shawl,  
Round which the swifts were flying;

And, tossed beside the Guelder rose,  
A heap of rainbow knitting,  
Where, blinking in her pleased repose,  
A Persian cat was sitting.

"A place to love in, — live, — for aye,  
If we too, like Tithonus,  
Could find some god to stretch the gray,  
Scant life the Fates have thrown us;

"But now by steam we run our race,  
With buttoned heart and pocket;  
Our Love's a gilded, surplus grace, —  
Just like an empty locket!

"The time is out of joint.' Who will  
May strive to make it better;  
For me, this warm old window-sill,  
And this old dusty letter."

#### II

"Dear *John* (the letter ran), it can't, can't  
be,  
For Father's gone to *Chorley Fair* with  
*Sam*,  
And Mother's storing Apples, — *Prue* and  
Me  
Up to our Elbows making Damson  
Jam:  
But we shall meet before a Week is gone, —  
'Tis a long Lane that has no turning,'  
*John!*

"Only till Sunday next, and then you'll  
wait  
Behind the White-Thorn, by the broken  
Stile —  
We can go round and catch them at the  
Gate,  
All to Ourselves, for nearly one long  
Mile;  
Dear *Prue* won't look, and Father he'll go  
on,  
And *Sam's* two Eyes are all for *Cissy*,  
*John!*

"*John*, she's so smart, — with every  
 Ribbon new,  
 Flame-colored Sack, and Crimson  
 Padesoy :  
 As proud as proud; and has the Vapors  
 too,  
 Just like *My Lady*; — calls poor *Sam* a  
 Boy,  
 And vows no Sweetheart's worth the  
 Thinking-on  
 Till he's past Thirty . . . I know better,  
*John!*

"My Dear, I don't think that I thought  
 of much  
 Before we knew each other, I and you;  
 And now, why, *John*, your least, least  
 Finger-touch,  
 Gives me enough to think a Summer  
 through.  
 See, for I send you Something! There,  
 'tis gone!  
 Look in this corner, — mind you find it,  
*John!*"

## III

This was the matter of the note, —  
 A long-forgot desposit,  
 Dropped in an Indian dragon's throat,  
 Deep in a fragrant closet,

Piled with a dapper Dresden world, —  
 Beaux, beauties, prayers, and poses, —  
 Bonzes with squat legs undercurled,  
 And great jars filled with roses.

Ah, heart that wrote! Ah, lips that  
 kissed!

You had no thought or presage  
 Into what keeping you dismissed  
 Your simple old-world message!

A reverent one. Though we to-day  
 Distrust beliefs and powers,  
 The artless, ageless things you say  
 Are fresh as May's own flowers,

Starring some pure primaeva! spring,  
 Ere Gold had grown despotic, —  
 Ere Life was yet a selfish thing,  
 Or Love a mere exotic!

I need not search too much to find  
 Whose lot it was to send it,  
 That feel upon me yet the kind  
 Soft hand of her who penned it;

And see, through two score years of  
 smoke,  
 In by-gone, quaint apparel,  
 Shine from yon time-black Norway oak  
 The face of *Patience Caryl*, —

The pale, smooth forehead, silver-tressed;  
 The gray gown, primly flowered;  
 The spotless, stately coif whose crest  
 Like *Hector's* horse-plume towered;

And still the sweet half-solemn look  
 Where some past thought was clinging,  
 As when one shuts a serious book  
 To hear the thrushes singing.

I kneel to you! Of those you were,  
 Whose kind old hearts grow mellow, —  
 Whose fair old faces grow more fair  
 As *Point* and *Flanders* yellow;

Whom some old store of garnered grief,  
 Their placid temples shading,  
 Crowns like a wreath of autumn leaf  
 With tender tints of fading.

Peace to your soul! You died unwed —  
 Despite this loving letter.  
 And what of *John*? The less that's said  
 Of *John*, I think the better. 1868.

## UNE MARQUISE

A RHYMED MONOLOGUE IN THE LOUVRE

"*Belle Marquise, vos beaux yeux me font  
 mourir d'amour.*" *MOLIÈRE.*

## I

As you sit there at your ease,  
 O *Marquise*!  
 And the men flock round your knees  
 Thick as bees,  
 Mute at every word you utter,  
 Servants to your least frill-flutter,  
 "*Belle Marquise!*" —  
 As you sit there growing prouder,  
 And your ringed hands glance and go,  
 And your fan's *frou-frou* sounds louder,  
 And your "*beaux yeux*" flash and  
 glow; —  
 Ah, you used them on the Painter,  
 As you know,  
 For the *Sieur Larose* spoke fainter,  
 Bowing low,

Thanked Madam and Heaven for Mercy  
That each sinner was not Circe,

Or at least he told you so; —  
Growing proud, I say, and prouder  
To the crowd that come and go,  
Dainty Deity of Powder,

Fickle Queen of Fop and Beau,  
As you sit where lustres strike you,  
Sure to please,  
Do we love you most, or like you,  
"Belle Marquise!"

## II

You are fair; O yes, we know it  
Well, Marquise:  
For he swore it, your last poet,  
On his knees;  
And he called all heaven to witness  
Of his ballad and its fitness,

"Belle Marquise!" —  
You were everything in *ère*  
(With exception of *sévère*), —  
You were *cruelle* and *rebelle*,  
With the rest of rhymes as well;  
You were "*Reine*," and "*Mère d'Amour*,"  
You were "*Vénus à Cythère*";  
"*Sappho mise en Pompadour*,"  
And "*Minerve en Parabère*";  
You had every grace of heaven  
In your most angelic face,  
With the nameless finer leaven  
Lent of blood and courtly race;  
And he added, too, in duty,  
Ninon's wit and Boufflers' beauty;  
And La Vallière's *yeux veloutés*  
Followed these,  
And you liked it, when he said it  
(On his knees),  
And you kept it, and you read it,  
"Belle Marquise!"

## III

Yet with us your toilet graces  
Fail to please  
And the last of your last faces,  
And your *mise*;  
For we hold you just as real,  
"Belle Marquise!"  
As your *Bergers* and *Bergères*,  
*Iles d'Amour* and *Bateaux*;  
As your *parcs*, and your *Versailles*,  
Gardens, grottoes, and *rocailles*;  
As your *Naiads* and your trees; —  
Just as near the old ideal  
Calm and ease,

As the *Venus* there, by *Coustou*,  
That a fan would make quite flighty,  
Is to her the gods were used to, —  
Is to grand Greek *Aphrodite*,  
Sprung from seas.  
You are just a porcelain trifle,  
"Belle Marquise!"  
Just a thing of puffs and patches,  
Made for madrigals and catches,  
Not for heart-wounds, but for scratches,  
O Marquise!  
Just a pinky porcelain trifle,  
"Belle Marquise!"  
Wrought in rarest *rose-Dubarry*,  
Quick at verbal point and parry,  
Clever, doubtless; — but to marry,  
No, Marquise!

## IV

For your *Cupid*, you have clipped him,  
Rouged and patched him, nipped and  
snipped him  
And with *chapeau-bras* equipped him,  
"Belle Marquise!" —  
Just to arm you through your wife-time,  
And the languors of your life-time,  
"Belle Marquise!" —  
Say, to trim your toilet tapers,  
Or, — to twist your hair in papers,  
Or, — to win you from the vapors; —  
As for these,  
You are worth the love they give you,  
Till a fairer face outlive you,  
Or a younger grace shall please;  
Till the coming of the crows' feet,  
And the backward turn of beaux' feet,  
"Belle Marquise!"  
Till your frothed-out life's commotion  
Settles down to *Ennui's* ocean,  
Or a dainty sham devotion,  
"Belle Marquise!"

## V

No; we neither like nor love you,  
"Belle Marquise!"  
Lesser lights we place above you, —  
Milder merits better please.  
We have passed from *Philosophe*-dom  
Into plainer modern days, —  
Grown contented in our oafdom,  
Giving grace not all the praise;  
And, *en partant*, *Arsinoë*, —  
Without malice whatsoever, —  
We shall counsel to our *Chloë*  
To be rather good than clever;

For we find it hard to smother  
 Just one little thought, Marquise!  
 Wittier perhaps than any other, —  
 You were neither Wife nor Mother,  
*"Belle Marquise!"*  
 1868.

### A GENTLEMAN OF THE OLD SCHOOL

HE lived in that past Georgian day,  
 When men were less inclined to say  
 That "Time is Gold," and overlay  
     With toil their pleasure;  
 He held some land, and dwelt thereon, —  
 Where, I forget, — the house is gone;  
 His Christian name, I think, was John, —  
     His surname, Leisure.

Reynolds has painted him, — a face  
 Filled with a fine, old-fashioned grace,  
 Fresh-colored, frank, with ne'er a trace  
     Of trouble shaded;  
 The eyes are blue, the hair is drest  
 In plainest way, — one hand is prest  
 Deep in a flapped canary vest,  
     With buds brocaded.

He wears a brown old Brunswick coat,  
 With silver buttons, — round his throat,  
 A soft cravat; — in all you note  
     An elder fashion, —  
 A strangeness, which, to us who shine  
 In shapely hats, — whose coats combine  
 All harmonies of hue and line, —  
     Inspires compassion.

He lived so long ago, you see!  
 Men were untravelled then, but we,  
 Like Ariel, post o'er land and sea  
     With careless parting;  
 He found it quite enough for him  
 To smoke his pipe in "garden trim,"  
 And watch, about the fish-tank's brim,  
     The swallows darting.

He liked the well-wheel's creaking  
     tongue, —  
 He liked the thrush that fed her young, —  
 He liked the drone of flies among  
     His netted peaches;  
 He liked to watch the sunlight fall  
 Athwart his ivied orchard wall;  
 Or pause to catch the cuckoo's call  
     Beyond the beeches.

His were the times of Paint and Patch,  
 And yet no Ranelagh could match  
 The sober doves that round his thatch  
     Spread tails and sidled;  
 He liked their ruffling, puffed content, —  
 For him their drowsy wheelings meant  
 More than a Mall of Beaux that bent,  
     Or Belles that bridled.

Not that, in truth, when life began,  
 He shunned the flutter of the fan;  
 He too had maybe "pinked his man"  
     In Beauty's quarrel;  
 But now his "fervent youth" had flown  
 Where lost things go; and he was  
     grown  
 As staid and slow-paced as his own  
     Old hunter, Sorrel.

Yet still he loved the chase, and held  
 That no composer's score excelled  
 The merry horn, when Sweetlip swelled  
     Its jovial riot;  
 But most his measured words of praise  
 Caressed the angler's easy ways, —  
 His idly meditative days, —  
     His rustic diet.

Not that his "meditating" rose  
 Beyond a sunny summer doze;  
 He never troubled his repose  
     With fruitless prying;  
 But held, as law for high and low,  
 What God withholds no man can know,  
 And smiled away inquiry so,  
     Without replying.

We read — alas, how much we read!  
 The jumbled strifes of creed and creed  
 With endless controversies feed  
     Our groaning tables;  
 His books — and they sufficed him — were  
 Cotton's "Montaigne," "The Grave" of  
     Blair,  
 A "Walton" — much the worse for wear —  
     And "Æsop's Fables."

One more, — "The Bible." Not that he  
 Had searched its page as deep as we;  
 No sophistries could make him see  
     Its slender credit;  
 It may be that he could not count  
 The sires and sons to Jesse's fount, —  
 He liked the "Sermon on the Mount," —  
     And more, he read it.





## A GREEK GIFT

HERE's a present for Rose,  
 How pleased she is looking!  
 Is it verse? — is it prose?  
 Here's a present for Rose!  
 "Plats," "*Entrées*," and "*Rôts*," —  
 Why, it's "Gouffé on Cooking."  
 Here's a present for Rose,  
 How pleased she is looking!

## "URCEUS EXIT"

I INTENDED an Ode,  
 And it turned to a Sonnet.  
 It began *à la mode*,  
 I intended an Ode;  
 But Rose crossed the road  
 In her latest new bonnet;  
 I intended an Ode;  
 And it turned to a Sonnet. 1874.

## "GOOD-NIGHT, BABETTE!"

"*Si vieillesse pouvait!* —"

SCENE. — *A small neat Room. In a high Voltaire Chair sits a white-haired old Gentleman.*

MONSIEUR VIEUXBOIS. BABETTE.

M. VIEUXBOIS (*turning querulously*).

DAY of my life! Where *can* she get?  
 BABETTE! I say! BABETTE! — BABETTE!

BABETTE (*entering hurriedly*).  
 Coming, M'sieu'! If M'sieu' speaks  
 So loud he won't be well for weeks!

M. VIEUXBOIS.

Where have you been?

BABETTE.

Why, M'sieu' knows: —  
 April! . . . Ville d'Avray! . . . Ma'am'-  
 selle ROSE!

M. VIEUXBOIS.

Ah! I am old, — and I forget.  
 Was the place growing green, BABETTE?

BABETTE.

But of a greenness! — yes, M'sieu'!  
 And then the sky so blue! — so blue!  
 And when I dropped my *immortelle*,  
 How the birds sang!

(*Lifting her apron to her eyes.*)

This poor Ma'am'selle!

## M. VIEUXBOIS.

You're a good girl, BABETTE, but she, —  
 She was an Angel, verily.  
 Sometimes I think I see her yet  
 Stand smiling by the cabinet;  
 And once, I know, she peeped and laughed  
 Betwixt the curtains . . .

Where's the draught?

(*She gives him a cup.*)

Now I shall sleep, I think, BABETTE; —  
 Sing me your Norman *chansonnette*.

BABETTE (*sings*).

"Once at the Angelus  
 (*Ere I was dead*),  
 Angels all glorious  
 Came to my Bed;  
 Angels in blue and white  
 Crowned on the Head."

M. VIEUXBOIS (*drowsily*).

"She was an Angel" . . . "Once she  
 laughed" . . .

What, was I dreaming?

Where's the draught?

BABETTE (*showing the empty cup*).

The draught, M'sieu'?

M. VIEUXBOIS.

How I forget!

I am so old! But sing, BABETTE!

BABETTE (*sings*).

"One was the Friend I left  
 Stark in the Snow;  
 One was the Wife that died  
 Long, — long ago;  
 One was the Love I lost . . .  
 How could she know?"

M. VIEUXBOIS (*murmuring*).

Ah, PAUL! . . . old PAUL! . . . EU-  
 LALIE too!

And ROSE . . . And O! "the sky so blue!"

BABETTE (*sings*).

"One had my Mother's eyes,  
 Wistful and mild;  
 One had my Father's face;  
 One was a Child:  
 All of them bent to me, —  
 Bent down and smiled!"

(He is asleep!)

M. VIEUXBOIS (*almost inaudibly*).

"How I forget!"

"I am so old!" . . . "Good-night,  
 BABETTE!" 1876.

## THE CHILD-MUSICIAN

HE had played for his lordship's levee,  
 He had played for her ladyship's whim,  
 Till the poor little head was heavy,  
 And the poor little brain would swim.

And the face grew peaked and eerie,  
 And the large eyes strange and bright,  
 And they said — too late — "He is  
 weary!

He shall rest for, at least, To-night!"

But at dawn, when the birds were waking,  
 As they watched in the silent room,  
 With the sound of a strained cord break-  
 ing,  
 A something snapped in the gloom.

'Twas a string of his violoncello,  
 And they heard him stir in his bed: —  
 "Make room for a tired little fellow,  
 Kind God!" — was the last that he  
 said. 1876.

## "YOU BID ME TRY"

You bid me try, BLUE-EYES, to write  
 A Rondeau. What! — forthwith? — to-  
 night?

Reflect. Some skill I have, 'tis true; —  
 But thirteen lines! — and rhymed on  
 two!

"Refrain," as well. Ah, hapless plight!

Still, there are five lines, — ranged aright.  
 These Gallic bonds, I feared, would fright  
 My easy Muse. They did, till you—  
 You bid me try!

That makes them eight. The port's in  
 sight; —

'Tis all because your eyes are bright!  
 Now just a pair to end in "oo" —  
 When maids command, what can't  
 we do!

Behold! — the RONDEAU, tasteful, light,  
 You bid me try!

1876.

## THE CRADLE

How steadfastly she'd worked at it!  
 How lovingly had drest  
 With all her would-be-mother's wit  
 That little rosy nest!

How longingly she'd hung on it! —  
 It sometimes seemed, she said,  
 There lay beneath its coverlet  
 A little sleeping head.

He came at last, the tiny guest,  
 Ere bleak December fled;  
 That rosy nest he never prest . . .  
 Her coffin was his bed.

1877.

## "WHEN I SAW YOU LAST, ROSE"

WHEN I saw you last, Rose,  
 You were only so high; —  
 How fast the time goes!

Like a bud ere it blows,  
 You just peeped at the sky,  
 When I saw you last, Rose!

Now your petals unclose,  
 Now your May-time is nigh; —  
 How fast the time goes!

And a life, — how it grows!  
 You were scarcely so shy,  
 When I saw you last, Rose!

In your bosom it shows  
 There's a guest on the sly;  
 (How fast the time goes!)

Is it Cupid? Who knows!  
 Yet you used not to sigh,  
 When I saw you last, Rose; —  
 How fast the time goes! 1877.

ON A FAN THAT BELONGED TO  
THE MARQUISE DE POMPADOUR

Chicken-skin, delicate, white,  
 Painted by Carlo Vanloo,  
 Loves in a riot of light,  
 Roses and vaporous blue;  
 Hark to the dainty *frou-frou*!  
 Picture above, if you can,  
 Eyes that could melt as the dew, —  
 This was the Pompadour's fan!

See how they rise at the sight,  
 Thronging the *Œil de Bœuf* through,

Courtiers as butterflies bright,  
 Beauties that Fragonard drew,  
*Talon-rouge*, falbala, queue,  
 Cardinal, Duke, — to a man,  
 Eager to sigh or to sue, —  
 This was the Pompadour's fan!

Ah, but things more than polite  
 Hung on this toy, *voyez-vous*!  
 Matters of state and of might,  
 Things that great ministers do;  
 Things that, maybe, overthrew  
 Those in whose brains they began;  
 Here was the sign and the cue, —  
 This was the Pompadour's fan!

## ENVY

Where are the secrets it knew?  
 Weavings of plot and of plan?  
 — But where is the Pompadour, too?  
*This was the Pompadour's Fan!*  
 1878

## THE LADIES OF ST. JAMES'S

▲ PROPER NEW BALLAD OF THE COUNTRY  
 AND THE TOWN

"*Phyllida amo ante alias.*" VIRG.

THE ladies of St. James's  
 Go swinging to the play;  
 Their footmen run before them,  
 With a "Stand by! Clear the  
 way!"  
 But Phyllida, my Phyllida!  
 She takes her buckled shoon,  
 When we go out a-courting  
 Beneath the harvest moon.

The ladies of St. James's  
 Wear satin on their backs;  
 They sit all night at *Ombre*,  
 With candles all of wax;  
 But Phyllida, my Phyllida!  
 She dons her russet gown,  
 And hastens to gather May dew  
 Before the world is down.

The ladies of St. James's!  
 They are so fine and fair,  
 You'd think a box of essences  
 Was broken in the air:  
 But Phyllida, my Phyllida!  
 The breath of heath and furze,  
 When breezes blow at morning,  
 Is not so fresh as hers.

The ladies of St. James's!  
 They're painted to the eyes,  
 Their white it stays for ever,  
 Their red it never dies:  
 But Phyllida, my Phyllida!  
 Her color comes and goes;  
 It trembles to a lily, —  
 It wavers to a rose.

The ladies of St. James's!  
 You scarce can understand  
 The half of all their speeches,  
 Their phrases are so grand:  
 But Phyllida, my Phyllida!  
 Her shy and simple words  
 Are clear as after rain-drops  
 The music of the birds.

The ladies of St. James's!  
 They have their fits and freaks;  
 They smile on you — for seconds;  
 They frown on you — for weeks:  
 But Phyllida, my Phyllida!  
 Come either storm or shine,  
 From Shrove-tide unto Shrove-tide,  
 Is always true — and mine.

My Phyllida! my Phyllida!  
 I care not though they heap  
 The hearts of all St. James's,  
 And give me all to keep;  
 I care not whose the beauties  
 Of all the world may be,  
 For Phyllida — for Phyllida  
 Is all the world to me!  
 1883.

## MY BOOKS

THEY dwell in the odor of camphor,  
 They stand in a Sheraton shrine,  
 They are "warranted early editions,"  
 These worshipful tomes of mine; —

In their creamiest "Oxford vellum,"  
 In their redolent "crushed Levant,"  
 With their delicate watered linings,  
 They are jewels of price, I grant; —

Blind-tooled and morocco-jointed,  
 They have Zaehnsdorf's daintiest dress,  
 They are graceful, attenuate, polished,  
 But they gather the dust, no less; —

For the row that I prize is yonder,  
 Away on the unglazed shelves,  
 The bulged and the bruised *octavos*,  
 The dear and the dumpy twelves, —

Montaigne with his sheepskin blistered,  
 And Howell the worse for wear,  
 And the worm-drilled Jesuits' Horace,  
 And the little old cropped Molière,

And the Burton I bought for a florin,  
 And the Rabelais foxed and flea'd, —  
 For the others I never have opened,  
 But those are the books I read.

1883.

## A DIALOGUE

TO THE MEMORY OF MR. ALEXANDER POPE

"Non injussa cano." VIRG.

POET. I sing of POPE —

FRIEND. What, POPE, the *Twitnam*  
 Bard,  
 Whom *Dennis*, *Cibber*, *Tibbald* push'd so  
 hard!

POPE of the *Dunciad*! POPE who dar'd to  
 woo,

And then to libel, *Wortley-Montagu*!  
 POPE of the *Ham-walks* story —

P. Scandals all!

Scandals that now I care not to recall.  
 Surely a little, in two hundred Years,  
 One may neglect Contemporary Sneers:—  
 Surely allowance for the Man may make  
 That had all *Grub Street* yelping in his  
 Wake!

And who (I ask you) has been never  
 Mean,  
 When urged by Envy, Anger or the  
 Spleen?

No: I prefer to look on POPE as one  
 Not rightly happy till his Life was done;  
 Whose whole Career, romance it as you  
 please,

Was (what he call'd it) but a "long  
 Disease":

Think of his Lot, — his Pilgrimage of  
 Pain,

His "crazy Carcass" and his restless  
 Brain;

Think of his Night-Hours with their Feet  
 of Lead,

His dreary Vigil and his aching Head;

Think of all this, and marvel then to find  
 The "crooked Body with a crooked  
 Mind!"

Nay, rather, marvel that, in Fate's De-  
 spite,

You find so much to solace and delight, —  
 So much of Courage, and of Purpose high  
 In that unequal Struggle *not* to die.

I grant you freely that POPE played his  
 Part

Sometimes ignobly — but he lov'd his Art;  
 I grant you freely that he sought his Ends  
 Not always wisely — but he lov'd his  
 Friends;

And who of Friends a nobler Roll could  
 show —

*Swift*, *St. John*, *Bathurst*, *Marchmont*,  
*Peterb'ro'*, *Arbuthnot* —

FR. ATTICUS?

P. Well (*entre nous*),  
 Most that he said of *Addison* was true.  
 Plain Truth, you know —

FR. Is often not polite  
 (So *Hamlet* thought) —

P. And *Hamlet* (Sir) was right  
 But leave POPE's Life. To-day, me-  
 thinks, we touch  
 The Work too little and the Man too  
 much.

Take up the *Lock*, the *Satires*, *Eloise* —  
 What Art supreme, what Elegance, what  
 Ease!

How keen the Irony, the Wit how bright,  
 The Style how rapid, and the Verse how  
 light!

Then read once more, and you shall  
 wonder yet

At Skill, at Turn, at Point, at Epithet.  
 "True Wit is Nature to Advantage  
 dress'd" —

Was ever Thought so pithily express'd?  
 "And ten low Words oft creep in one dull  
 Line" —

Ah, what a Homily on Yours . . . and  
 Mine!

Or take — to choose at Random — take  
 but This —

"Ten censure wrong for one that writes  
 amiss."

FR. Pack'd and precise, no Doubt.  
 Yet surely those

Are but the Qualities we ask of Prose.  
 Was he a POET?



P. Yes: if that be what  
*Byron* was certainly and *Bowles* was not;  
 Or say you grant him, to come nearer  
 Date,  
 What *Dryden* had, that was denied to  
 Tale —

FR. Which means, you claim for him  
 the Spark divine,  
 Yet scarce would place him on the highest  
 Line —

P. True, there are Classes. POPE was  
 most of all  
 Akin to *Horace*, *Persius*, *Juvenal*;  
 POPE was, like them, the Censor of his Age,  
 An Age more suited to Repose than Rage;  
 When Rhyming turn'd from Freedom to  
 the Schools,  
 And shock'd with Licence, shudder'd into  
 Rules;  
 When *Phæbus* touch'd the Poet's trem-  
 bling Ear  
 With one supreme Commandment, *Be  
 thou Clear*;  
 When Thought meant less to reason than  
 compile,  
 And the *Muse* labor'd . . . chiefly with  
 the File.

Beneath full Wigs, no Lyric drew its  
 Breath  
 As in the Days of great ELIZABETH;  
 And to the Bards of ANNA was denied  
 The Note that *Wordsworth* heard on  
*Duddon*-side.  
 But POPE took up his Parable, and knit  
 The Woof of Wisdom with the Warp of  
 Wit;  
 He trimm'd the Measure on its equal Feet,  
 And smooth'd and fitted till the Line was  
 neat;  
 He taught the Pause with due Effect to  
 fall;  
 He taught the Epigram to come at Call;  
 He wrote —

FR. His *Iliad*!

P. Well, suppose you own  
 You like your *Iliad* in the Prose of *Bohn*,—  
 Tho' if you'd learn in Prose how *Homer*  
 sang,  
 'Twere best to learn of *Butcher* and of  
*Lang*,—  
 Suppose you say your Worst of POPE,  
 declare  
 His Jewels Paste, his Nature a Parterre,

His Art but Artifice — I ask once more  
 Where have you seen such Artifice before?  
 Where have you seen a Parterre better  
 grac'd,  
 Or Gems that glitter like his Gems of  
 Paste?  
 Where can you show, among your Names  
 of Note,  
 So much to copy and so much to quote?  
 And where, in Fine, in all our English  
 Verse,  
 A style more trenchant and a Sense more  
 terse?

So I, that love the old *Augustan* Days  
 Of formal Courtesies and formal Phrase;  
 That like along the finished Line to feel  
 The Ruffle's Flutter and the Flash of  
 Steel;  
 That like my Couplet as compact as clear;  
 That like my Satire sparkling tho' severe,  
 Unmix'd with Bathos and unmarr'd by  
 Trope,  
 I fling my Cap for Polish — and for POPE!  
 1888.

## HENRY FIELDING

(TO JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL)

NOT from the ranks of those we call  
 Philosopher or Admiral, —  
 Neither as LOCKE was, nor as BLAKE,  
 Is that Great Genius for whose sake  
 We keep this Autumn festival.

And yet in one sense, too, was he  
 A soldier — of humanity;  
 And, surely, philosophic mind  
 Belonged to him whose brain designed  
 That teeming COMIC EPOS where,  
 As in CERVANTES and MOLIÈRE,  
 Jostles the medley of Mankind.

Our ENGLISH NOVEL's pioneer!  
 His was the eye that first saw clear  
 How, not in natures half-effaced  
 By cant of Fashion and of Taste, —  
 Not in the circles of the Great,  
 Faint-blooded and exanimate, —  
 Lay the true field of Jest and Whim,  
 Which we to-day reap after him.  
 No: — he stepped lower down and took  
 The piebald PEOPLE for his Book!

Ah, what a wealth of Life there is  
 In that large-laughing page of his!

What store and stock of Common-Sense,  
Wit, Wisdom, Books, Experience!  
How his keen Satire flashes through,  
And cuts a sophistry in two!  
How his ironic lightning plays  
Around a rogue and all his ways!  
Ah, how he knots his lash to see  
That ancient cloak, Hypocrisy!

Whose are the characters that give  
Such round reality? — that live  
With such full pulse? Fair SOPHY yet  
Sings *Bobbing Joan* at the spinet;  
We see AMELIA cooking still  
That supper for the recreant WILL;  
We hear Squire WESTERN'S headlong  
tones  
Bawling "Wut ha? — wut ha?" to JONES.  
Are they not present now to us, —  
The Parson with his *Aeschylus*?  
SLIPSLOP the frail, and NORTHERTON,  
PARTRIDGE, and BATH, and HARRISON? —  
Are they not breathing, moving, — all  
The motley, merry carnival  
That FIELDING kept, in days agone?

He was the first that dared to draw  
Mankind the mixture that he saw;  
Not wholly good nor ill, but both,  
With fine intricacies of growth.  
He pulled the wraps of flesh apart,  
And showed the working human heart;  
He scorned to drape the truthful nude  
With smooth, decorous platitude!

He was too frank, may be; and dared  
Too boldly. Those whose faults he bared,  
Writhed in the ruthless grasp that brought  
Into the light their secret thought.  
Therefore the TARTUFFE-throng who say  
"*Couvrez ce sein*," and look that way, —  
Therefore the Priests of Sentiment  
Rose on him with their garments rent.  
Therefore the gadfly swarm whose sting  
Plies ever round some generous thing,  
Buzzed of old bills and tavern-scores,  
Old "might-have-beens" and "hereto-  
fores"; —  
Then, from that garbled record-list,  
Made him his own Apologist.

And was he? Nay, — let who has known  
Nor Youth nor Error, cast the stone!  
If to have sense of Joy and Pain  
Too keen, — to rise, to fall again,  
To live too much, — be sin, why then,

This was no pattern among men.  
But those who turn that later page,  
The Journal of his middle-age,  
Watch him serene in either fate, —  
Philanthropist and Magistrate;  
Watch him as Husband, Father, Friend,  
Faithful, and patient to the end;  
Grieving, as e'en the brave may grieve,  
But for the loved ones he must leave:  
These will admit — if any can —  
That 'neath the green Estrella trees,  
No artist merely, but a MAN,  
Wrought on our noblest island-plan,  
Sleeps with the alien Portuguese. 1883.

#### FOR A COPY OF "THE VICAR OF WAKEFIELD"

By GOLDSMITH'S tomb the City's cry  
Grows faint and distant; now no more,  
From that famed street he trod of yore,  
Men turn where those old Templars lie!

Only some dreamer such as I  
Pauses awhile from dust and roar  
By GOLDSMITH'S tomb!

And then — ah, then! — when none is  
nigh,  
What shadowy shapes, unseen before,  
Troop back again from Lethe's shore! —  
How the ghosts gather then, and sigh  
By GOLDSMITH'S tomb!  
1883.

#### TO LAURENCE HUTTON

[With a Volume of Verses]

THERE is no "mighty purpose" in this  
book.  
Of that I warn you at the opening page,  
Lest haply 'twixt the leaves you careless  
look  
And finding nothing to reform the age,  
Fall with the rhyme and rhymers in a  
rage.  
Let others prate of problems and of  
powers;  
I bring but fancies born of idle hours,  
That striving only after Art and Ease,  
Have scarcely more of moral than the  
flowers  
And little else of mission than to please.  
1884.

*In After Days*

*In after days when grasses high  
O'er-top the stone where I shall lie,  
Though ill or well the world adjust  
My slender claim to honored dust,  
I shall not question or reply.*

*I shall not see the morning sky;  
I shall not hear the night-wind sigh;  
I shall be mute, as all men must  
In after days!*

*But yet, now living, fain were I  
That some one then should testify,  
Saying — "He held his pen in trust  
To Art, not serving shame or lust."  
Will none? — Then let my memory die  
In after days!*

1884.

## A GREETING

(TO W. C.)

BUT once or twice we met, touched hands.  
To-day between us both expands  
A waste of tumbling waters wide, —  
A waste by me as yet untried,  
Vague with the doubt of unknown lands.

Time like a despot speeds his sands:  
A year he blots, a day he brands;  
We walked, we talked by Thamís' side  
But once or twice.

What makes a friend? What filmy  
strands  
Are these that turn to iron bands?  
What knot is this so firmly tied  
That naught but Fate can now  
divide? —  
Ah, these are things one understands  
But once or twice!

1890.

EPILOGUE TO EIGHTEENTH  
CENTURY VIGNETTES

(SECOND SERIES)

"WHAT is it then," — some Reader  
asks, —  
"What is it that attaches  
Your fancy so to fans and masks, —  
To periwigs and patches?"

"Is Human Life to-day so poor, —  
So bloodless, — you disdain it,  
To 'galvanize' the Past once more?"  
— Permit me. I'll explain it.

This Age I grant (and grant with pride),  
Is varied, rich, eventful;  
But, if you touch its weaker side,  
Deplorably resentful:

Belaud it, and it takes your praise  
With air of calm conviction;  
Condemn it, and at once you raise  
A storm of contradiction.

Whereas with these old Shades of mine,  
Their ways and dress delight me;  
And should I trip by word or line,  
They cannot well indict me.

Not that I think to err. I seek  
To steer 'twixt blame and blindness;  
I strive (as some one said in Greek)  
To speak the truth with kindness:

But — should I fail to render clear  
Their title, rank, or station —  
I still may sleep secure, nor fear  
A suit for defamation.

1894.

PROLOGUE TO EIGHTEENTH  
CENTURY VIGNETTES

(THIRD SERIES)

"*Versute . . .*" — HOR. *Ars Poetica*.

How shall a Writer change his ways?  
Read his Reviewers' blame, not praise.  
In blame, as Boileau said of old,  
The truth is shadowed, if not told.

\* \* \* \* \*

There! Let that row of stars extend  
To hide the faults I mean to mend.  
Why should the Public need to know  
The standard that I fall below?  
Or learn to search for that defect  
My Critic bids me to correct?  
No: in this case the Worldly-Wise  
Keep their own counsel — and revise.

. . . . .

Yet much I love to arabesque  
 What Gautier christened a "Grotesque";  
 To take his oddities and "lunes,"  
 And drape them neatly with festoons,  
 Until, at length, I chance to get  
 The thing I designate "Vignette."

To sum the matter then: — My aim  
 Is modest. This is all I claim:  
 To paint a part and not the whole,  
 The trappings rather than the soul

The Evolution of the Time,  
 The silent Forces fighting Crime,  
 The fetishes that fail, and pass,  
 The struggle between Class and Class,  
 The Wealth still adding land to lands,  
 The Crown that falls, the Faith that  
 stands . . .  
 All this I leave to abler hands.

1896.

# "GOOD LUCK TO YOUR FISHING!"<sup>1</sup>

Good luck to your fishing!  
 And what have you caught?  
 Ah, would that my wishing  
 Were more than a thought!  
 Ah, would you had caught her,  
 Young Chloë, for me, —  
 Young Chloë, the daughter  
 Of Proteus, the sea!

She irks me, she irks me,  
 With blue of her eyes;  
 She irks me, she irks me,  
 With little drawn sighs;  
 She lures me with laughter,  
 She tempts me with tears;  
 And hope follows after, —  
 Hope only, — and fears!

Good luck to your fishing!  
 But would you had caught  
 That maid beyond wishing,  
 That maid beyond thought!  
 O cast the line deeper,  
 Deep — deep in the sea;  
 And catch her, and keep her,  
 Dan Cupid, for me!

1900. 1901.

## THAT WOODEN CROSS

THAT wooden cross beside the road  
 Marks — as the now-blurred legend  
 showed —

That there a "soldat anglais" dead  
 Has found betimes his foreign bed —  
 His last impregnable abode.

'Tis no uncommon episode,  
 You say, of war's barbaric code,  
 For which so many men have bled —  
 That wooden cross!

Nay, but this blood was well bestowed;  
 'Twas shed for nations 'neath the load  
 Of mailed oppression fury-fed,  
 And ruthless rapine, sore bestead.  
 Surely it needs no funeral ode —  
 That wooden cross!

1914.

## FOR THE BLINDED SOLDIERS

WE that look on, with God's goodwill,  
 Have one plain duty to fulfil:  
 To drive — by all fair means — afar  
 This hideous Juggernaut of War,  
 And teach the Future not to kill.

But there's a plainer duty still:  
 We need to meet the instant ill,  
 To heal the wound, to hide the scar —  
 We that look on!

What timelier task for brain and quill  
 Than aiding eyes no light can thrill,  
 No sight of all good things that are,  
 No morning sky, no evening star —  
 Shall we not help with all our skill,  
 We that look on?

1915.

*The glint of a raindrop;  
 The song of a bird;  
 The laughter of children, —  
 Just overheard;  
 These make up your magic, —  
 These sing in your song;  
 May you sing it for ever,  
 And ever so long!*

1923.

<sup>1</sup> For a Picture by G. F. WATTS, R. A.

# HENLEY

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# HENLEY

## FROM IN HOSPITAL

I

### ENTER PATIENT

THE morning mists still haunt the stony street;

The northern summer air is shrill and cold;

And lo, the Hospital, grey, quiet, old,  
Where Life and Death like friendly chaffers meet.

Thro' the loud spaciousness and draughty gloom

A small, strange child — so agèd yet so young! —

Her little arm besplinted and beslung,  
Precedes me gravely to the waiting-room.  
I limp behind, my confidence all gone.

The grey-haired soldier-porter waves me on,

And on I crawl, and still my spirits fail:

A tragic meanness seems so to environ  
These corridors and stairs of stone and iron,

Cold, naked, clean — half-workhouse and half-jail.

II

### WAITING

A SQUARE, squat room (a cellar on promotion),

Drab to the soul, drab to the very daylight;

Plasters astray in unnatural-looking tinware;

Scissors and lint and apothecary's jars.

Here, on a bench a skeleton would writhe from,

Angry and sore, I wait to be admitted:  
Wait till my heart is lead upon my stomach,

While at their ease two dressers do their chores.

One has a probe — it feels to me a crow-bar.

A small boy sniffs and shudders after bluestone.

A poor old tramp explains his poor old ulcers.

Life is (I think) a blunder and a shame.

• IV

### BEFORE

BEHOLD me waiting — waiting for the knife.

A little while, and at a leap I storm  
The thick, sweet mystery of chloroform,

The drunken dark, the little death-in-life.  
The gods are good to me: I have no wife,

No innocent child, to think of as I near  
The fateful minute; nothing all-too dear

Unmans me for my bout of passive strife.  
Yet I am tremulous and a trifle sick,

And, face to face with chance, I shrink a little:

My hopes are strong, my will is something weak.

Here comes the basket? Thank you.  
I am ready.

But, gentlemen my porters, life is brittle:  
You carry Cæsar and his fortunes —

steady!

VIII

### STAFF-NURSE: OLD STYLE

THE greater masters of the commonplace,  
REMBRANDT and good SIR WALTER —

only these

Could paint her all to you: experienced ease

And antique liveliness and ponderous grace;

The sweet old roses of her sunken face;  
The depth and malice of her sly, grey eyes;

The broad Scots tongue that flatters,  
scolds, defies;

The thick Scots wit that fells you like a mace.

These thirty years has she been nursing  
here,  
Some of them under SYME, her hero still.  
Much is she worth, and even more is made  
of her.

Patients and students hold her very dear.  
The doctors love her, tease her, use her  
skill.

They say "The Chief" himself is half-  
afraid of her.

XXIII  
MUSIC

DOWN the quiet eve,  
Thro' my window with the sunset  
Pipes to me a distant organ  
Foolish ditties;

And, as when you change  
Pictures in a magic lantern,  
Books, beds, bottles, floors, and ceiling  
Fade and vanish,

And I'm well once more . . .  
August flares adust and torrid.  
But my heart is full of April  
Sap and sweetness.

In the quiet eve  
I am loitering, longing, dreaming . . .  
Dreaming, and a distant organ  
Pipes me ditties.

I can see the shop,  
I can smell the sprinkled pavement,  
Where she serves — her chestnut chignon  
Thrills my senses!

O, the sight and scent,  
Wistful eve and perfumed pavement!  
In the distance pipes an organ . . .  
The sensation

Comes to me anew,  
And my spirit for a moment  
Thro' the music breathes the blessed  
Airs of London.

XXVII  
NOCTURN

At the barren heart of midnight,  
When the shadow shuts and opens  
As the loud flames pulse and flutter,  
I can hear a cistern leaking.

Dripping, dropping, in a rhythm,  
Rough, unequal, half-melodious,  
Like the measures aped from nature  
In the infancy of music;

Like the buzzing of an insect,  
Still, irrational, persistent . . .  
I must listen, listen, listen  
In a passion of attention;

Till it taps upon my heartstrings,  
And my very life goes dripping,  
Dropping, dripping, drip-drip-dropping,  
In the drip-drop of the cistern.

XXVIII  
DISCHARGED

CARRY me out  
Into the wind and the sunshine,  
Into the beautiful world.

O, the wonder, the spell of the streets!  
The stature and strength of the horses,  
The rustle and echo of footfalls,  
The flat roar and rattle of wheels!  
A swift tram floats huge on us . . .  
It's a dream?  
The smell of the mud in my nostrils  
Blows brave — like a breath of the sea!

As of old,  
Ambulant, undulant drapery,  
Vaguely and strangely provocative,  
Flutters and beckons. O, yonder —  
Is it? — the gleam of a stocking!  
Sudden, a spire

Wedged in the mist! O, the houses,  
The long lines of lofty, grey houses,  
Cross-hatched with shadow and light!  
These are the streets. . . .  
Each is an avenue leading  
Whither I will!

Free . . . !  
Dizzy, hysterical, faint,  
I sit, and the carriage rolls on with me  
Into the wonderful world.

1873-1875. 1888.

## THE SONG OF THE SWORD

(TO RUDYARD KIPLING)

*The Sword**Singing —**The voice of the Sword from the heart of the  
Sword**Clanging imperious**Forth from Time's battlements**His ancient and triumphant Song.*

In the beginning,  
 Ere God inspired Himself  
 Into the clay thing  
 Thumbed to His image,  
 The vacant, the naked shell  
 Soon to be Man :  
 Thoughtful He pondered it,  
 Prone there and impotent,  
 Fragile, inviting  
 Attack and discomfiture ;  
 Then, with a smile —  
 As He heard in the Thunder  
 That laughed over Eden  
 The Voice of the Trumpet,  
 The iron Beneficence,  
 Calling his dooms  
 To the Winds of the world —  
 Stooping, He drew  
 On the sand with His finger  
 A shape for a sign  
 Of his way to the eyes  
 That in wonder should waken,  
 For a proof of His will  
 To the breaking intelligence.  
 That was the birth of me :  
 I am the Sword.

Bleak and lean, grey and cruel,  
 Short-hilted, long shafted,  
 I froze into steel ;  
 And the blood of my elder,  
 His hand on the hafts of me,  
 Sprang like a wave  
 In the wind, as the sense  
 Of his strength grew to ecstasy ;  
 Glowed like a coal  
 In the throat of the furnace ;  
 As he knew me and named me  
 The War-Thing, the Comrade,  
 Father of honor  
 And giver of kingship,  
 The fame-smith, the song-master,  
 Bringer of women  
 On fire at his hands

For the pride of fulfilment,  
*Priest* (saith the Lord)  
*Of his marriage with victory.*  
 Ho ! then, the Trumpet,  
 Handmaid of heroes,  
 Calling the peers  
 To the place of espousals !  
 Ho ! then, the splendor  
 And glare of my ministry,  
 Clothing the earth  
 With a livery of lightnings !  
 Ho ! then, the music  
 Of battles in onset,  
 And ruining armors.  
 Edged to annihilate,  
 Hilted with government,  
 Follow, O, follow me,  
 Till the waste places  
 All the grey globe over  
 Ooze, as the honeycomb  
 Drips, with the sweetness  
 Distilled of my strength,  
 And, teeming in peace  
 Through the wrath of my coming,  
 They give back in beauty  
 The dread and the anguish  
 They had of me visitant !  
 Follow, O follow, then,  
 Heroes, my harvesters !  
 Where the tall grain is ripe  
 Thrust in your sickles !  
 Stripped and adust  
 In a stubble of empire,  
 Scything and binding  
 The full sheaves of sovranity ;  
 Thus, O, thus gloriously,  
 Shall you fulfil yourselves !  
 Thus, O, thus mightily,  
 Show yourselves sons of mine —  
 Excesses in service  
 Of the Womb universal,  
 The absolute drudge ;  
 Firing the charactry  
 Carved on the World  
 The miraculous gem  
 In the seal-ring that burns  
 On the hand of the Master —  
 Yea ! and authority  
 Flames through the dim,  
 Unappeasable Grisliness  
 Prone down the nethermost  
 Chasms of the Void ! —  
 Clear singing, clean slicing ;  
 Sweet spoken, soft finishing ;  
 Making death beautiful,  
 Life but a coin

To be staked in the pastime  
 Whose playing is more  
 Than the transfer of being;  
 Arch-anarch, chief builder,  
 Prince and evangelist,  
 I am the Will of God:  
 I and the Sword.

*The Sword*

*Singing —*

*The voice of the Sword from the heart of the  
 Sword*

*Clanging majestic,  
 As from the starry-staired  
 Courts of the primal Supremacy,  
 His high, irresistible song.*

1890.

## FROM BRIC-A-BRAC

### BALLADE OF A TOYOKUNI COLOR-PRINT

TO W. A.

WAS I a Samurai renowned,  
 Two-sworded, fierce, immense of bow?  
 A histron angular and profound?  
 A priest? a porter? — Child, although  
 I have forgotten clean, I know  
 That in the shade of Fujisan,  
 What time the cherry-orchards blow,  
 I loved you once in old Japan.

As here you loiter, flowing-gowned  
 And hugely sashed, with pins a-row  
 Your quaint head as with flamelets  
 crowned,

Demure, inviting — even so,  
 When merry maids in Miyako  
 To feel the sweet o' the year began,  
 And green gardens to overflow,  
 I loved you once in old Japan.

Clear shine the hills; the rice-fields round  
 Two cranes are circling; sleepy and  
 slow,

A blue canal the lake's blue bound  
 Breaks at the bamboo bridge; and lo!  
 Touched with the sundown's spirit and  
 glow,

I see you turn, with flirted fan,  
 Against the plum-tree's bloomy snow. . . .  
 I loved you once in old Japan!

ENVOY

Dear, 'twas a dozen lives ago;  
 But that I was a lucky man  
 The Toyokuni here will show:  
 I loved you — once — in old Japan.

## ORIENTALE

SHE'S an enchanting little Israelite,  
 A world of hidden dimples! — Dusky-  
 eyed,

A starry-glancing daughter of the Bride,  
 With hair escaped from some Arabian  
 Night,

Her lip is red, her cheek is golden-white,  
 Her nose a scimitar; and, set aside  
 The bamboo hat she cocks with so much  
 pride,

Her dress a dream of daintiness and  
 delight.

And when she passes with the dreadful  
 boys

And romping girls, the cockneys loud and  
 crude,

My thought, to the Minories tied yet  
 moved to range

The Land o' the Sun, commingles with the  
 noise

Of magian drums and scents of sandal-  
 wood

A touch Sidonian — modern — taking —  
 strange!

## FROM A WINDOW IN PRINCES STREET

TO M. M. M'B.

ABOVE the Craggs that fade and gloom  
 Starts the bare knee of Arthur's Seat;  
 Ridged high against the evening bloom,  
 The Old Town rises, street on street;  
 With lamps bejewelled, straight ahead,  
 Like rampired walls the houses lean,  
 All spired and domed and turreted,  
 Sheer to the valley's darkling green;  
 Ranged in mysterious disarray,  
 The Castle, menacing and austere,  
 Looms through the lingering last of day;  
 And in the silver dusk you hear,  
 Reverberated from crag and scar,  
 Bold bugles blowing points of war.



BESIDE the idle summer sea  
And in the vacant summer days,  
Light Love came fluting down the ways,  
Where you were loitering with me.

Who has not welcomed, even as we,  
That jocund minstrel and his lays  
Beside the idle summer sea  
And in the vacant summer days?

We listened, we were fancy-free;  
And lo! in terror and amaze  
We stood alone — alone at gaze  
With an implacable memory  
Beside the idle summer sea.

WE shall surely die:  
Must we needs grow old?  
Grow old and cold,  
And we know not why?

O, the By-and-Bye,  
And the tale that's told!  
We shall surely die:  
Must we needs grow old?

Grow old and sigh,  
Grudge and withhold,  
Resent and scold? . . .  
Not you and I?  
We shall surely die!

1877-1888. 1888.

## FROM ECHOES

### III

O, GATHER me the rose, the rose,  
While yet in flower we find it,  
For summer smiles, but summer goes,  
And winter waits behind it!

For with the dream foregone, foregone,  
The deed forborne for ever,  
The worm, regret, will canker on,  
And Time will turn him never.

So well it were to love, my love,  
And cheat of any laughter  
The fate beneath us and above,  
The dark before and after.

The myrtle and the rose, the rose,  
The sunshine and the swallow,  
The dream that comes, the wish that goes,  
The memories that follow!

### IV

## INVICTUS<sup>1</sup>

OUT of the night that covers me,  
Black as the Pit from pole to pole,  
I thank whatever gods may be  
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance  
I have not winced nor cried aloud.  
Under the bludgeonings of chance  
My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears  
Looms but the Horror of the shade,  
And yet the menace of the years  
Finds, and shall find, me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,  
How charged with punishments the  
scroll,  
I am the master of my fate:  
I am the captain of my soul.

### XIV

THE wan sun westers, faint and slow;  
The eastern distance glimmers gray;  
An eerie haze comes creeping low  
Across the little, lonely bay;  
And from the sky-line far away  
About the quiet heaven are spread  
Mysterious hints of dying day,  
Thin, delicate dreams of green and red.

And weak, reluctant surges lap  
And rustle round and down the strand.  
No other sound . . . If it should hap,  
The ship that sails from fairy-land!  
The silken shrouds with spells are manned,  
The hull is magically scrolled,  
The squat mast lives, and in the sand  
The gold prow-griffin claws a hold.

It steals to seaward silently;  
Strange fish-folk follow thro' the gloom,  
Great wings flap overhead; I see  
The Castle of the Drowsy Doom  
Vague thro' the changeless twilight loom,  
Enchanted, hushed. And ever there  
She slumbers in eternal bloom,  
Her cushions hid with golden hair.

<sup>1</sup> Original title: "I. M. R. T. Hamilton Bruce  
(1846-1899)."



## XVIII

## TO A. D.

THE nightingale has a lyre of gold,  
 The lark's is a clarion call,  
 And the blackbird plays but a boxwood  
 flute,  
 But I love him best of all.

For his song is all of the joy of life,  
 And we in the mad, spring weather,  
 We two have listened till he sang  
 Our hearts and lips together.

## XIX

YOUR heart has trembled to my tongue,  
 Your hands in mine have lain,  
 Your thought to me has leaned and clung,  
 Again and yet again,  
 My dear,  
 Again and yet again.

Now die the dream, or come the wife,  
 The past is not in vain,  
 For wholly as it was your life  
 Can never be again,  
 My dear,  
 Can never be again.

## XXIX

## TO R. L. S.

A CHILD,  
 Curious and innocent,  
 Slips from his Nurse, and rejoicing  
 Loses himself in the Fair.

Thro' the jostle and din  
 Wandering, he revels,  
 Dreaming, desiring, possessing;  
 Till, of a sudden  
 Tired and afraid, he beholds  
 The sordid assemblage  
 Just as it is; and he runs  
 With a sob to his Nurse  
 (Lighting at last on him),  
 And in her motherly bosom  
 Cries him to sleep.

Thus thro' the World,  
 Seeing and feeling and knowing,  
 Goes Man: till at last,  
 Tired of experience, he turns  
 To the friendly and comforting breast  
 Of the old nurse, Death.

## XXXV

## I. M.

## MARGARITÆ SORORI

(1886)

A LATE lark twitters from the quiet  
 skies;  
 And from the west,  
 Where the sun, his day's work ended,  
 Lingers as in content,  
 There falls on the old, grey city  
 An influence luminous and serene,  
 A shining peace.

The smoke ascends  
 In a rosy-and-golden haze. The spires  
 Shine, and are changed. In the valley  
 Shadows rise. The lark sings on. The  
 sun,  
 Closing his benediction,  
 Sinks, and the darkening air  
 Thrills with a sense of the triumphing  
 night—  
 Night with her train of stars  
 And her great gift of sleep.

So be my passing!  
 My task accomplished and the long day  
 done,  
 My wages taken, and in my heart  
 Some late lark singing,  
 Let me be gathered to the quiet west,  
 The sundown splendid and serene,  
 Death.

## XXXVI

I GAVE my heart to a woman—  
 I gave it her, branch and root.  
 She bruised, she wrung, she tortured,  
 She cast it under foot.

Under her feet she cast it,  
 She trampled it where it fell,  
 She broke it all to pieces,  
 And each was a clot of hell.

There in the rain and the sunshine  
 They lay and smouldered long;  
 And each, when again she viewed them,  
 Had turned to a living song.

## XXXVII

## TO W. A.

OR ever the knightly years were gone  
 With the old world to the grave,  
 I was a King in Babylon  
 And you were a Christian Slave.

I saw, I took, I cast you by,  
 I bent and broke your pride.  
 You loved me well, or I heard them lie,  
 But your longing was denied,  
 Surely I knew that by and by  
 You cursed your gods and died.

And a myriad suns have set and shone  
 Since then upon the grave  
 Decead by the King of Babylon  
 To her that had been his Slave.

The pride I trampled is now my scathe,  
 For it tramples me again.  
 The old resentment lasts like death,  
 For you love, yet you refrain.  
 I break my heart on your hard unfaith,  
 And I break my heart in vain.

Yet not for an hour do I wish undone  
 The deed beyond the grave,  
 When I was a King in Babylon  
 And you were a Virgin Slave.

## XXXVIII

ON the way to Kew,  
 By the river old and gray,  
 Where in the Long Ago,  
 We laughed and loitered so,  
 I met a ghost to-day,  
 A ghost that told of you —  
 A ghost of low replies  
 And sweet, inscrutable eyes  
 Coming up from Richmond  
 As you used to do.

By the river old and gray,  
 The enchanted Long Ago  
 Murmured and smiled anew.  
 On the way to Kew,  
 March had the laugh of May,  
 The bare boughs looked aglow,  
 And old immortal words  
 Sang in my breast like birds,  
 Coming up from Richmond  
 As I used with you.

With the life of Long Ago  
 Lived my thought of you.  
 By the river old and gray  
 Flowing his appointed way  
 As I watched I knew  
 What is so good to know —  
 Not in vain, not in vain,  
 Shall I look for you again  
 Coming up from Richmond  
 On the way to Kew.

## XL

THE spring, my dear,  
 Is no longer spring.  
 Does the blackbird sing  
 What he sang last year?  
 Are the skies the old  
 Immemorial blue?  
 Or am I, or are you,  
 Grown cold?

Though life be change,  
 It is hard to bear  
 When the old sweet air  
 Sounds forced and strange.  
 To be out of tune,  
 Plain You and I . . .  
 It were better to die,  
 And soon!

1874-1880? 1888.

# FROM LONDON VOLUN- TARIES

(TO CHARLES WHIBLEY)

## III

*Scherzando*

DOWN through the ancient Strand  
 The spirit of October, mild and boon  
 And sauntering, takes his way  
 This golden end of afternoon,  
 As though the corn stood yellow in all the  
 land,  
 And the ripe apples dropped to the  
 harvest-moon.

Lo! the round sun, half-down the west-  
 ern slope —  
 Seen as along an unglazed telescope —  
 Lingers and lolls, loth to be done with  
 day:  
 Gifting the long, lean, lanky street

And its abounding confluences of being  
With aspects generous and bland;  
Making a thousand harnesses to shine  
As with new ore from some enchanted  
mine,

And every horse's coat so full of sheen  
He looks new-tailored, and every 'bus  
feels clean,

And never a hansom but is worth the  
feeling;

And every jeweller within the pale  
Offers a real Arabian Night for sale;

And even the roar  
Of the strong streams of toil, that pause  
and pour

Eastward and westward, sounds suf-  
fused —

Seems as it were bemused  
And blurred, and like the speech  
Of lazy seas on a lotus-haunted beach —  
With this enchanted lustrousness,  
This mellow magic, that (as a man's  
caress

Brings back to some faded face, beloved  
before,

A heavenly shadow of the grace it wore  
Ere the poor eyes were minded to beseech)  
Old things transfigures, and you hail and  
bless

Their looks of long-lapsed loveliness once  
more :

Till Clement's, angular and cold and staid,  
Gleams forth in glamour's very stuffs  
arrayed;

And Bride's, her æry, unsubstantial  
charm

Through flight on flight of springing, soar-  
ing stone

Grown flushed and warm,  
Laughs into life full-mooded and fresh-  
blown;

And the high majesty of Paul's  
Uplifts a voice of living light, and calls —  
Calls to his millions to behold and see  
How goodly this his London Town can be !

For earth and sky and air  
Are golden everywhere,  
And golden with a gold so suave and fine  
The looking on it lifts the heart like wine.  
Trafalgar Square

(The fountains volleying golden glaze)  
Shines like an angel-market. High aloft  
Over his couchant Lions, in a haze  
Shimmering and bland and soft,  
A dust of chrysoprase,

Our Sailor takes the golden gaze  
Of the saluting sun, and flames superb,  
As once he flamed it on his ocean round.  
The dingy dreariness of the picture-place  
Turned very nearly bright,  
Takes on a luminous transiency of grace,  
And shows no more a scandal to the  
ground.

The very blind man pottering on the kerb  
Among the posies and the ostrich feathers  
And the rude voices touched with all the  
weathers

Of the long, varying year,  
Shares in the universal alms of light.  
The windows, with their fleeting, flicker-  
ing fires,

The height and spread of frontage shining  
sheer,

The quiring signs, the rejoicing roofs and  
spires —

'Tis El Dorado — El Dorado plain,  
The Golden City ! And when a girl goes  
by,

Look ! as she turns her glancing head,  
A call of gold is floated from her ear !  
Golden, all golden ! In the golden glory,  
Long-lapsing down a golden coasted sky,  
The day, not dies, but seems  
Dispersed in wafts and drifts of gold, and  
shed

Upon a past of golden song and story  
And memories of gold and golden dreams.

1892.

## FROM RHYMES AND RHYTHMS

### PROLOGUE

*Something is dead . . .  
The grace of sunset solitudes, the march  
Of the solitary moon, the pomp and power  
Of round on round of shining soldier-stars  
Patrolling space, the bounties of the sun —  
Sovran, tremendous, unimaginable —  
The multitudinous friendliness of the sea,  
Possess no more — no more.*

*Something is dead . . .  
The Autumn rain-rot deeper and wider  
soaks  
And spreads, the burden of Winter heavier  
weighs  
His melancholy close and closer yet  
Cleaves, and those incantations of the Spring*

*That made the heart a centre of miracles  
Grow formal, and the wonder-working hours  
Arise no more — no more.*

*Something is dead . . .  
'Tis time to creep in close about the fire.*

## I

TO H. B. M. W.

WHERE forlorn sunsets flare and fade  
On desolate sea and lonely sand,  
Out of the silence and the shade  
What is the voice of strange command  
Calling you still, as friend calls friend  
With love that cannot brook delay  
To rise and follow the ways that wend  
Over the hills and far away?

Hark in the city, street on street  
A roaring reach of death and life,  
Of vortices that clash and fleet  
And ruin in appointed strife,  
Hark to it calling, calling clear,  
Calling until you cannot stay  
From dearer things than your own most  
dear  
Over the hills and far away?

Out of the sound of the ebb-and-flow,  
Out of the sight of lamp and star,  
It calls you where the good winds blow,  
And the unchanging meadows are :  
From faded hopes and hopes agleam,  
It calls you, calls you night and day  
Beyond the dark into the dream  
Over the hills and far away.

## V

WHY, my heart, do we love her so?  
(Geraldine, Geraldine!)  
Why does the great sea ebb and flow? —  
Why does the round world spin?  
Geraldine, Geraldine,  
Bid me my life renew:  
What is it worth unless I win,  
Love — love and you?

Why, my heart, when we speak her name  
(Geraldine, Geraldine!)  
Throbs the word like a flinging flame? —  
Why does the Spring begin?  
Geraldine, Geraldine,  
Bid me indeed to be :

Open your heart, and take us in,  
Love — love and me.

## XI

GULLS in an æry morrice  
Gleam and vanish and gleam . . .  
The full sea, sleepily basking,  
Dreams under skies of dream.

Gulls in an æry morrice  
Circle and swoop and close . . .  
Fuller and ever fuller  
The rose of the morning blows.

Gulls, in an æry morrice  
Frolicking, float and fade . . .  
O, the way of a bird in the sunshine,  
The way of a man with a maid!

## XXV

WHAT have I done for you,  
England, my England?  
What is there I would not do,  
England, my own?  
With your glorious eyes austere,  
As the Lord were walking near,  
Whispering terrible things and dear  
As the Song on your bugles blown,  
England —  
Round the world on your bugles  
blown!

Where shall the watchful Sun,  
England, my England,  
Match the master-work you've done  
England, my own?  
When shall he rejoice again  
Such a breed of mighty men  
As come forward, one to ten,  
To the Song on your bugles blown,  
England —  
Down the years on your bugles  
blown?

Ever the faith endures,  
England, my England: —  
"Take and break us: we are yours,  
England, my own!  
Life is good, and joy runs high  
Between English earth and sky:  
Death is death; but we shall die  
To the Song on your bugles blown,  
England —  
To the stars on your bugles blown!"

They call you proud and hard,  
 England, my England:  
 You with worlds to watch and ward,  
 England, my own!  
 You whose mailed hand keeps the keys  
 Of such teeming destinies  
 You could know nor dread nor ease  
 Were the Song on your bugles blown,  
 England,  
 Round the Pit on your bugles blown!

Mother of Ships whose might,  
 England, my England,  
 Is the fierce old Sea's delight,  
 England, my own,  
 Chosen daughter of the Lord,  
 Spouse-in-Chief of the ancient sword,  
 There's the menace of the Word

In the Song on your bugles blown,  
 England —  
 Out of heaven on your bugles blown!  
*1889-1892. 1893.*

## A BOWL OF ROSES

It was a bowl of roses:  
 There in the light they lay,  
 Languishing, glorying, glowing  
 Their life away.

And the soul of them rose like a presence,  
 Into me crept and grew,  
 And filled me with something — some  
 one —  
 O, was it you?



# KIPLING

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## KIPLING

### THE BALLAD OF EAST AND WEST

*Oh, East is East, and West is West, and  
never the twain shall meet,  
Till Earth and Sky stand presently at God's  
great Judgment Seat;  
But there is neither East nor West, Border,  
nor Breed, nor Birth,  
When two strong men stand face to face,  
though they come from the ends of the  
earth!*

Kamal is out with twenty men to raise the  
Border side.

And he has lifted the Colonel's mare that  
is the Colonel's pride.

He has lifted her out of the stable-door  
between the dawn and the day,

And turned the calkins upon her feet, and  
ridden her far away.

Then up and spoke the Colonel's son that  
led a troop of the Guides:

"Is there never a man of all my men can  
say where Kamal hides?"

Then up and spoke Mohammed Khan, the  
son of the Ressaldar:

"If ye know the track of the morning-  
mist, ye know where his pickets are.

"At dusk he harries the Abazai — at  
dawn he is into Bonair,

"But he must go by Fort Bukloh to his  
own place to fare.

"So if ye gallop to Fort Bukloh as fast as  
a bird can fly,

"By the favour of God ye may cut him off  
ere he win to the Tongue of Jagai.

"But if he be past the Tongue of Jagai,  
right swiftly turn ye then,

"For the length and the breadth of that  
grisly plain is sown with Kamal's  
men.

"There is rock to the left, and rock to the  
right, and low lean thorn between,

"And ye may hear a breech-bolt snick  
where never a man is seen."

The Colonel's son has taken horse, and a  
raw rough dun was he,

With the mouth of a bell and the heart of  
Hell and the head of a gallows-tree.

The Colonel's son to the Fort has won,  
they bid him stay to eat —

Who rides at the tail of a Border thief, he  
sits not long at his meat.

He's up and away from Fort Bukloh as  
fast as he can fly,

Till he was aware of his father's mare in  
the gut of the Tongue of Jagai,

Till he was aware of his father's mare with  
Kamal upon her back,

And when he could spy the white of her  
eye, he made the pistol crack.

He has fired once, he has fired twice, but  
the whistling ball went wide.

"Ye shoot like a soldier," Kamal said.  
"Show now if ye can ride!"

It's up and over the Tongue of Jagai, as  
blown dust-devils go,

The dun he fled like a stag of ten, but the  
mare like a barren doe.

The dun he leaned against the bit and  
slugged his head above,

But the red mare played with the snaffle-  
bars, as a maiden plays with a  
glove.

There was rock to the left and rock to the  
right, and low lean thorn between,

And thrice he heard a breech-bolt snick  
tho' never a man was seen.

They have ridden the low moon out of the  
sky, their hoofs drum up the dawn,

The dun he went like a wounded bull, but  
the mare like a new-roused fawn.

The dun he fell at a water-course — in a  
woeful heap fell he,

And Kamal has turned the red mare back,  
and pulled the rider free.

He has knocked the pistol out of his  
hand — small room was there to  
strive,

"'Twas only by favour of mine," quoth  
he, "ye rode so long alive:

"There was not a rock for twenty mile,  
there was not a clump of tree,

"But covered a man of my own men with  
his rifle cocked on his knee.

"If I had raised my bridle-hand, as I have  
held it low,

"The little jackals that flee so fast were  
feasting all in a row.

"If I had bowed my head on my breast, as  
I have held it high,

"The kite that whistles above us now  
were gorged till she could not  
fly."

Lightly answered the Colonel's son: "Do  
good to bird and beast,

"But count who come for the broken  
meats before thou makest a feast.

"If there should follow a thousand swords  
to carry my bones away,

"Belike the price of a jackal's meal were  
more than a thief could pay.

"They will feed their horse on the stand-  
ing crop, their men on the garnered  
grain.

"The thatch of the byres will serve  
their fires when all the cattle are  
slain.

"But if thou thinkest the price be fair, —  
thy brethren wait to sup,

"The hound is kin to the jackal-spawn, —  
howl, dog, and call them up!

"And if thou thinkest the price be high,  
in steer and gear and stack,

"Give me my father's mare again, and I'll  
fight my own way back!"

Kamal has gripped him by the hand and  
set him upon his feet.

"No talk shall be of dogs," said he,  
"when wolf and grey wolf meet.

"May I eat dirt if thou hast hurt of me in  
deed or breath;

"What dam of lances brought thee forth  
to jest at the dawn with Death?"

Lightly answered the Colonel's son: "I  
hold by the blood of my clan:

"Take up the mare for my father's gift —  
by God, she has carried a man!"

The red mare ran to the Colonel's son,  
and nuzzled against his breast;

"We be two strong men," said Kamal  
then, "but she loveth the younger  
best.

"So she shall go with a lifter's dower, my  
turquois-studded rein,

"My 'broidered saddle and saddle-cloth,  
and silver stirrups twain."

The Colonel's son a pistol drew, and held  
it muzzle-end,

"Ye have taken the one from a foe," said  
he. "Will ye take the mate from  
a friend?"

"A gift for a gift," said Kamal straight;  
"a limb for the risk of a limb.

"Thy father has sent his son to me, I'll  
send my son to him!"

With that he whistled his only son, that  
dropped from a mountain-crest —  
He trod the ling like a buck in spring, and  
he looked like a lance in rest.

"Now here is thy master," Kamal said,  
"who leads a troop of the Guides,

"And thou must ride at his left side as  
shield on shoulder rides.

"Till Death or I cut loose the tie, at  
camp and board and bed,

"Thy life is his — thy fate it is to guard  
him with thy head.

"So, thou must eat the White Queen's  
meat, and all her foes are thine,

"And thou must harry thy father's hold  
for the peace of the Border-line.

"And thou must make a trooper tough  
and hack thy way to power —

"Belike they will raise thee to Ressaider  
when I am hanged in Peshawur!"

They have looked each other between  
the eyes, and there they found no  
fault.

They have taken the Oath of the Brother-  
in-Blood on leavened bread and  
salt:

They have taken the Oath of the Brother-  
in-Blood on fire and fresh-cut sod,  
On the hilt and the haft of the Khyber  
knife, and the Wondrous Names of  
God.

The Colonel's son he rides the mare and  
Kamal's boy the dun,

And two have come back to Fort Bukloh  
where they went forth but one.

And when they drew to the Quarter-  
Guard, full twenty swords flew  
clear —

There was not a man but carried his feud  
with the blood of the mountaineer.

"Ha' done! ha' done!" said the Colonel's  
son. "Put up the steel at your  
sides!

"Last night ye had struck at a Border  
thief — to-night 'tis a man of the  
Guides!"

*Oh, East is East, and West is West, and  
 never the twain shall meet,  
 Till Earth and Sky stand presently at God's  
 great Judgment Seat;  
 But there is neither East nor West, Border,  
 nor Breed, nor Birth,  
 When two strong men stand face to face,  
 though they come from the ends of the  
 earth!* 1889.

## PRELUDE

(*To Departmental Ditties*)

*I have eaten your bread and salt.  
 I have drunk your water and wine.  
 The deaths ye died I have watched beside,  
 And the lives ye led were mine.*

*Was there aught that I did not share  
 In vigil or toil or ease, —  
 One joy or woe that I did not know,  
 Dear hearts across the seas?*

*I have written the tale of our life  
 For a sheltered people's mirth,  
 In jesting guise — but ye are wise,  
 And ye know what the jest is worth.* 1890.

## DANNY DEEVER

"WHAT are the bugles blowin' for?" said  
 Files-on-Parade.  
 "To turn you out, to turn you out," the  
 Colour-Sergeant said.  
 "What makes you look so white, so  
 white?" said Files-on-Parade.  
 "I'm dreadin' what I've got to watch,"  
 the Colour-Sergeant said.  
 For they're hangin' Danny Deever,  
 you can hear the Dead March  
 play,  
 The regiment's in 'ollow square —  
 they're hangin' him to-day;  
 They've taken of his buttons off an'  
 cut his stripes away,  
 An' they're hangin' Danny Deever  
 in the mornin'.

"A touch o' sun, a touch o' sun," the  
 Colour-Sergeant said.  
 They are hangin' Danny Deever,  
 they are marchin' of 'im  
 round,  
 They 'ave 'alted Danny Deever by  
 'is coffin on the ground;  
 An' 'e'll swing in 'arf a minute for a  
 sneakin' shootin' hound —  
 O they're hangin' Danny Deever in  
 the mornin'!

"'Is cot was right-'and cot to mine," said  
 Files-on-Parade.  
 "'E's sleepin' out an' far to-night," the  
 Colour-Sergeant said.  
 "I've drunk 'is beer a score o' times," said  
 Files-on-Parade.  
 "'E's drinkin' bitter beer alone," the  
 Colour-Sergeant said.  
 They are hangin' Danny Deever, you  
 must mark 'im to 'is place,  
 For 'e shot a comrade sleepin' — you  
 must look 'im in the face;  
 Nine 'undred of 'is county an' the  
 Regiment's disgrace,  
 While they're hangin' Danny Deever  
 in the mornin'.

"What's that so black agin the sun?"  
 said Files-on-Parade.  
 "It's Danny fightin' 'ard for life," the  
 Colour-Sergeant said.  
 "What's that that whimpers over'eard?"  
 said Files-on-Parade.  
 "It's Danny's soul that's passin' now,"  
 the Colour-Sergeant said.  
 For they're done with Danny Deever,  
 you can 'ear the quickstep  
 play,  
 The regiment's in column, an' they're  
 marchin' us away;  
 Ho! the young recruits are shakin',  
 an' they'll want their beer  
 to-day,  
 After hangin' Danny Deever in the  
 mornin'! 1890.

## TOMMY

"What makes the rear-rank breathe so  
 'ard?" said Files-on-Parade.  
 "It's bitter cold, it's bitter cold," the  
 Colour-Sergeant said.  
 "What makes that front-rank man fall  
 down?" said Files-on-Parade.

I WENT into a public-'ouse to get a pint o'  
 beer,  
 The publican 'e up an' sez, "We serve no  
 red-coats here."  
 The girls be'ind the bar they laughed an'  
 giggled fit to die,



I outs into the street again an' to myself  
sez I:

O it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that,  
an' "Tommy, go away";

But it's "Thank you, Mister Atkins,"  
when the band begins to  
play—

The band begins to play, my boys,  
the band begins to play,

O it's "Thank you, Mister Atkins,"  
when the band begins to play.

I went into a theatre as sober as could be,  
They gave a drunk civilian room, but  
'adn't none for me;

They sent me to the gallery or round the  
music-halls,

But when it comes to fightin', Lord!  
they'll shove me in the stalls!

For it's Tommy this, an' Tommy  
that, an' "Tommy, wait out-  
side";

But it's "Special train for Atkins"  
when the trooper's on the  
tide—

The troopship's on the tide, my boys,  
the troopship's on the tide,

O it's "Special train for Atkins"  
when the trooper's on the tide.

Yes, makin' mock o' uniforms that guard  
you while you sleep

Is cheaper than them uniforms, an'  
they're starvation cheap;

An' hustlin' drunken soldiers when  
they're goin' large a bit

Is five times better business than paradin'  
in full kit.

Then it's Tommy this, an' Tommy  
that, an' "Tommy, 'ow's yer  
soul?"

But it's "Thin red line of 'eroes"  
when the drums begin to roll—

The drums begin to roll, my boys,  
the drums begin to roll,

O it's "Thin red line of 'eroes" when  
the drums begin to roll.

We aren't no thin red 'eroes, nor we aren't  
no blackguards too,

But single men in barracks, most remark-  
able like you;

An' if sometimes our conduct isn't all  
your fancy paints,

Why, single men in barracks don't grow  
into plaster saints;

While it's Tommy this, an' Tommy  
that, an' "Tommy, fall  
be'ind,"

But it's "Please to walk in front, sir,"  
when there's trouble in the  
wind—

There's trouble in the wind, my boys,  
there's trouble in the wind,

O it's "Please to walk in front, sir,"  
when there's trouble in the  
wind.

You talk o' better food for us, an' schools,  
an' fires, an' all:

We'll wait for extry rations if you treat us  
rational.

Don't mess about the cook-room slops,  
but prove it to our face

The Widow's Uniform is not the soldier-  
man's disgrace.

For it's Tommy this, an' Tommy  
that, an' "Chuck him out, the  
brute!"

But it's "Saviour of 'is country"  
when the guns begin to shoot;

An' it's Tommy this, an' Tommy  
that, an' anything you please;

An' Tommy ain't a bloomin' fool—  
you bet that Tommy sees!

1890.

## GUNGA DIN

YOU may talk o' gin and beer  
When you're quartered safe out 'ere,  
An' you're sent to penny-fights an'  
Aldershot it;

But when it comes to slaughter  
You will do your work on water,  
An' you'll lick the bloomin' boots of 'im  
that's got it.

Now in Injia's sunny clime,  
Where I used to spend my time  
A-servin' of 'Er Majesty the Queen,  
Of all them black-faced crew  
The finest man I knew

Was our regimental bhisti, Gunga Din.

He was "Din! Din! Din!"

"You limpin' lump o' brick-dust,  
Gunga Din!"

"Hi! Slippy *hitherao!*"

"Water, get it! *Pancee lao*"

"You squidgy-nosed old idol, Gunga  
Din."

<sup>1</sup> Bring water swiftly.

The uniform 'e wore  
 Was nothin' much before,  
 An' rather less than 'arf o' that be'ind,  
 For a piece o' twisty rag  
 An' a goatskin water-bag  
 Was all the field-equipment 'e could find.  
 When the sweatin' troop-train lay  
 In a sidin' through the day,  
 Where the 'eat would make your bloomin'  
 eyebrows crawl,  
 We shouted "Harry By!"<sup>1</sup>  
 Till our throats were bricky-dry,  
 Then we wopped 'im 'cause 'e couldn't  
 serve us all.

It was "Din! Din! Din!"  
 "You 'eathen, where the mischief 'ave  
 you been?"

"You put some *juldee*<sup>2</sup> in it  
 "Or I'll *marrow*<sup>3</sup> you this  
 minute

"If you don't fill up my helmet, Gunga  
 Din!"

'E would dot an' carry one  
 Till the longest day was done;  
 An' 'e didn't seem to know the use o' fear.  
 If we charged or broke or cut,  
 You could bet your bloomin' nut,  
 'E'd be waitin' fifty paces right flank rear.  
 With 'is mussick<sup>4</sup> on 'is back,  
 'E would skip with our attack,  
 An' watch us till the bugles made "Retire"  
 An' for all 'is dirty 'ide  
 'E was white, clear white, inside  
 When 'e went to tend the wounded under  
 fire!

It was "Din! Din! Din!"  
 With the bullets kickin' dust-spots on  
 the green

When the cartridges ran out,  
 You could hear the front-  
 ranks shout,

"Hi! ammunition-mules an' Gunga  
 Din!"

I sha'n't forgit the night  
 When I dropped be'ind the fight  
 With a bullet where my belt-plate should  
 'a' been.

I was chokin' mad with thirst,  
 An' the man that spied me first  
 Was our good old grinnin', gruntin' Gunga  
 Din.

'E lifted up my 'ead,  
 An' he plugged me where I bled,

<sup>1</sup> O brother.

<sup>2</sup> Be quick.

<sup>3</sup> Hit you.

<sup>4</sup> Water-skin.

An' 'e guv me 'arf-a-pint o' water green.  
 It was crawlin' and it stunk,  
 But of all the drinks I've drunk,  
 I'm gratefulest to one from Gunga Din.

It was "Din! Din! Din!"

"'Ere's a beggar with a bullet through  
 'is spleen;

"'E's chawin' up the ground,

"An' 'e's kickin' all around:

"For Gawd's sake git the water, Gunga  
 Din!"

'E carried me away  
 To where a dooli lay,  
 An' a bullet come an' drilled the beggar  
 clean.

'E put me safe inside,  
 An' just before 'e died,  
 "I 'ope you liked your drink," sez Gunga  
 Din.

So I'll meet 'm later on  
 At the place where 'e is gone —  
 Where it's always double drill and no  
 canteen.

'E'll be squattin' on the coals  
 Givin' drink to poor damned souls,  
 An' I'll get a swig in hell from Gunga Din!  
 Yes, Din! Din! Din!

You Lazarushian-leather Gunga Din!  
 Though I've belted you and  
 flayed you,  
 By the livin' Gawd that made  
 you,

You're a better man than I am, Gunga  
 Din!  
 1890.

## MANDALAY

By the old Moulmein Pagoda, lookin'  
 eastward to the sea,  
 There's a Burma girl a-settin', and I  
 know she thinks o' me;  
 For the wind is in the palm-trees, and the  
 temple-bells they say:

"Come you back, you British soldier;  
 come you back to Mandalay!"

Come you back to Mandalay,  
 Where the old Flotilla lay:  
 Can't you 'ear their paddles  
 chunkin' from Rangoon  
 to Mandalay?

On the road to Mandalay,  
 Where the flyin'-fishes play,  
 An' the dawn comes up like  
 thunder outer China  
 'crost the Bay!

'Er petticoat was yaller an' 'er little cap  
 was green,  
 An' 'er name was Supi-yaw-lat — jes' the  
 same as Theebaw's Queen,  
 An' I seed her first a-smokin' of a whackin'  
 white cheroot,  
 An' a-wastin' Christian kisses on an  
 'eathen idol's foot:  
     Bloomin' idol made o' mud —  
     Wot they called the Great  
     Gawd Budd —  
     Plucky lot she cared for idols  
     when I kissed 'er where  
     she stud!  
 On the road to Mandalay . . .

When the mist was on the rice-fields an'  
 the sun was droppin' slow,  
 She'd git 'er little banjo an' she'd sing  
 "Kulla-lo-lo!"  
 With 'er arm upon my shoulder an' 'er  
 cheek agin my cheek  
 We useter watch the steamers an' the  
*hathis* pilin' teak.  
     Elephints a-pilin' teak  
     In the sludgy, sudgy creek,  
     Where the silence 'ung that  
     'eavy you was 'arf afraid  
     to speak!  
 On the road to Mandalay . . .

But that's all shove be'ind me — long ago  
 an' fur away,  
 An' there ain't no 'busses runnin' from the  
 Bank to Mandalay;  
 An' I'm learnin' 'ere in London what the  
 ten-year soldier tells:  
 "If you've 'eard the East a-callin', you  
 won't never 'eed naught else."  
     No! you won't 'eed nothin'  
     else  
     But them spicy garlic smells,  
     An' the sunshine an' the palm-  
     trees an' the tinkly  
     temple-bells;  
 On the road to Mandalay . . .

I am sick o' wastin' leather on these gritty  
 pavin'-stones,  
 An' the blasted English drizzle wakes the  
 fever in my bones;  
 Tho' I walks with fifty 'ousemaids outer  
 Chelsea to the Strand,  
 An' they talks a lot o' lovin', but wot do  
 they understand?

Beefy face an' grubby 'and —  
 Law! wot do they understand?  
 I've a neater, sweeter maiden  
 in a cleaner, greener land!  
 On the road to Mandalay . . .

Ship me somewheres east of Suez, where  
 the best is like the worst,  
 Where there aren't no Ten Command-  
 ments an' a man can raise a thirst;  
 For the temple-bells are callin', an' it's  
 there that I would be —  
 By the old Moulmein Pagoda, looking  
 lazy at the sea;  
     On the road to Mandalay,  
     Where the old Flotilla lay,  
     With our sick beneath the  
     awnings when we went to  
     Mandalay!  
     O the road to Mandalay,  
     Where the flyin'-fishes play,  
     An' the dawn comes up like  
     thunder outer China  
     'crost the Bay!

1890.

#### WHEN EARTH'S LAST PICTURE IS PAINTED

WHEN Earth's last picture is painted and  
 the tubes are twisted and dried,  
 When the oldest colours have faded, and  
 the youngest critic has died,  
 We shall rest, and, faith, we shall need it  
 — lie down for an æon or two,  
 Till the Master of All Good Workmen  
 shall put us to work anew.

And those that were good shall be happy:  
 they shall sit in a golden chair;  
 They shall splash at a ten-league canvas  
 with brushes of comets' hair.  
 They shall find real saints to draw from —  
 Magdalene, Peter, and Paul;  
 They shall work for an age at a sitting and  
 never be tired at all!

And only The Master shall praise us, and  
 only The Master shall blame;  
 And no one shall work for money, and no  
 one shall work for fame,  
 But each for the joy of the working, and  
 each, in his separate star,  
 Shall draw the Thing as he sees It for the  
 God of Things as They are!

1892.

## IN THE NEOLITHIC AGE

In the Neolithic Age savage warfare did I wage

For food and fame and woolly horses' pelt;

I was singer to my clan in that dim, red Dawn of Man,

And I sang of all we fought and feared and felt.

Yea, I sang as now I sing, when the Pre-historic spring

Made the piled Biscayan ice-pack split and shove;

And the troll and gnome and dwerg, and the Gods of Cliff and Berg

Were about me and beneath me and above.

But a rival of Solutré, told the tribe my style was *outré* —

'Neath a tomahawk, of diorite, he fell.

And I left my views on Art, barbed and tanged, below the heart

Of a mammothistic etcher at Grenelle.

Then I stripped them, scalp from skull, and my hunting-dogs fed full,

And their teeth I threaded neatly on a thong;

And I wiped my mouth and said, "It is well that they are dead,

"For I know my work is right and theirs was wrong."

But my Totem saw the shame; from his ridgepole-shrine he came,

And told me in a vision of the night: —

"There are nine and sixty ways of constructing tribal lays,

"And every single one of them is right!"

. . . . .

Then the silence closed upon me till They put new clothing on me

Of whiter, weaker flesh and bone more frail;

And I stepped beneath Time's finger, once again a tribal singer,

And a minor poet certified by Traill!

Still they skirmish to and fro, men my messmates on the snow,

When we headed off the aurochs turn for turn;

When the rich Allobrogenses never kept amanuenses,

And our only plots were piled in lakes at Berne.

Still a cultured Christian age sees us scuffle, squeak, and rage,

Still we pinch and slap and jabber, scratch and dirk;

Still we let our business slide — as we dropped the half-dressed hide —

To show a fellow-savage how to work.

Still the world is wondrous large, — seven seas from marge to marge —

And it holds a vast of various kinds of man;

And the wildest dreams of Kew are the facts of Khatmandhu,

And the crimes of Clapham chaste in Martaban.

Here's my wisdom for your use, as I learned it when the moose

And the reindeer roared where Paris roars to-night: —

"There are nine and sixty ways of constructing tribal lays,

"And — every — single — one — of — them — is — right!"

1892, 1895.

## A SONG OF THE ENGLISH

*FAIR is our lot — O goodly is our heritage!  
(Humble ye, my people, and be fearful in your mirth!)*

*For the Lord our God Most High*

*He hath made the deep as dry,*

*He hath smote for us a pathway to the ends of all the Earth!*

*Yea, though we sinned, and our rulers went from righteousness —*

*Deep in all dishonour though we stained our garments' hem,*

*Oh be ye not dismayed,*

*Though we stumbled and we strayed,*

*We were led by evil counsellors — the Lord shall deal with them!*

*Hold ye the Faith — the Faith our Fathers sealed us;*

*Whoring not with visions — overwise and overstale,*

*Except ye pay the Lord  
Single heart and single sword,  
Of your children in their bondage He shall  
ask them treble-tale!*

*Keep ye the Law — be swift in all obedi-  
ence —*

*Clear the land of evil, drive the road and  
bridge the ford.*

*Make ye sure to each his own  
That he reap where he hath sown;  
By the peace among Our peoples let men  
know we serve the Lord!*

*Hear now a song — a song of broken inter-  
ludes —*

*A song of little cunning; of a singer nothing  
worth.*

*Through the naked words and mean  
May ye see the truth between,  
As the singer knew and touched it in the ends  
of all the Earth! 1893.*

### THE KING

"FAREWELL, Romance!" the Cave-men  
said;

"With bone well carved he went  
away.

"Flint arms the ignoble arrowhead,  
"And jasper tips the spear to-day.

"Changed are the Gods of Hunt and  
Dance,

"And He with these. Farewell, Ro-  
mance!"

"Farewell, Romance!" the Lake-folk  
sighed;

"We lift the weight of flatling years;

"The caverns of the mountain-side  
"Hold Him who scorns our hutted  
piers.

"Lost hills whereby we dare not dwell,

"Guard ye His rest. Romance, Fare-  
well!"

"Farewell, Romance!" the Soldier spoke;

"By sleight of sword we may not win,

"But scuffle 'mid uncleanly smoke  
"Of arquebus and culverin.

"Honour is lost, and none may tell

"Who paid good blows. Romance, fare-  
well!"

"Farewell, Romance!" the Traders  
cried;

"Our keels have lain with every sea.

"The dull-returning wind and tide

"Heave up the wharf where we would  
be;

"The known and noted breezes swell

"Our trudging sails. Romance, fare-  
well!"

"Good-bye, Romance!" the Skipper said;

"He vanished with the coal we burn.

"Our dial marks full-steam ahead,

"Our speed is timed to half a turn.

"Sure as the ferried barge we ply

"Twixt port and port. Romance, good-  
bye!"

"Romance!" the season-tickets mourn,

"He never ran to catch his train,

"But passed with coach and guard and  
horn —

"And left the local — late again!"

Confound Romance! . . . And all un-  
seen

Romance brought up the nine-fifteen.

His hand was on the lever laid,

His oil-can soothed the worrying cranks,

His whistle waked the snowbound grade,

His fog-horn cut the reeking Banks;

By dock and deep and mine and mill

The Boy-god reckless laboured still!

Robed, crowned and throned, He wove  
his spell,

Where heart-blood beat or hearth-  
smoke curled,

With unconsidered miracle,

Hedged in a backward-gazing world:

Then taught his chosen bard to say:

"Our King was with us — yesterday!"  
1894.

### THE SONG OF THE BANJO

You couldn't pack a Broadwood half a  
mile —

You mustn't leave a fiddle in the  
damp —

You couldn't raft an organ up the Nile,

And play it in an Equatorial swamp.

I travel with the cooking-pots and pails —

I'm sandwiched 'tween the coffee and  
the pork —



And when the dusty column checks and  
tails,  
You should hear me spur the rearguard  
to a walk !

With my "*Pilly-willy-winky-winky-  
popp!*"  
[Oh, it's any tune that comes into  
my head !]  
So I keep 'em moving forward till  
they drop ;  
So I play 'em up to water and to  
bed.

In the silence of the camp before the fight,  
When it's good to make your will and  
say your prayer,  
You can hear my *strumpty-tumpty* over-  
night,  
Explaining ten to one was always fair.  
I'm the Prophet of the Utterly Absurd,  
Of the Patently Impossible and Vain —  
And when the Thing that Couldn't have  
occurred,  
Give me time to change my leg and go  
again.

With my "*Tumpha-tumpha-tumpha-  
tumpha-tum!*"  
In the desert where the dung-fed  
camp-smoke curled.  
There was never voice before us till  
I led our lonely chorus,  
I — the war-drum of the White  
Man round the world !

By the bitter road the Younger Son must  
tread,  
Ere he win to hearth and saddle of his  
own, —  
'Mid the riot of the shearers at the shed,  
In the silence of the herder's hut  
alone —  
In the twilight, on a bucket upside down,  
Hear me babble what the weakest won't  
confess —  
I am Memory and Torment — I am  
Town !  
I am all that ever went with evening  
dress !

With my "*Tunka-tunka-tunka-tunka-  
tunk!*"  
[So the lights — the London  
Lights — grow near and plain !]

So I rowl 'em afresh towards the  
Devil and the Flesh,  
Till I bring my broken rankers  
home again.

In desire of many marvels over sea,  
Where the new-raised tropic city sweats  
and roars,  
I have sailed with Young Ulysses from  
the quay  
Till the anchor rumbled down on  
stranger shores.  
He is blooded to the open and the sky,  
He is taken in a snare that shall not fail,  
He shall hear me singing strongly, till he  
die,  
Like the shouting of a backstay in a gale.

With my "*Hya! Heeya! Heeya!  
Hullah! Haul!*"  
[Oh the green that thunders aft  
along the deck !]  
Are you sick o' towns and men?  
You must sign and sail again,  
For it's "Johnny Bowlegs, pack  
your kit and trek !"

Through the gorge that gives the stars at  
noon-day clear —  
Up the pass that packs the scud be-  
neath our wheel —  
Round the bluff that sinks her thousand  
fathom sheer —  
Down the valley with our guttering  
brakes asqueal :  
Where the trestle groans and quivers in  
the snow,  
Where the many-shedded levels loop  
and twine.  
Hear me lead my reckless children from  
below  
Till we sing the Song of Roland to the  
pine !

With my "*Tinka-tinka-tinka-tinka-  
tink!*"  
[Oh the axe has cleared the moun-  
tain, croup and crest !]  
And we ride the iron stallions down  
to drink,  
Through the cañons to the waters  
of the West !

And the tunes that mean so much to you  
alone —  
Common tunes that make you choke  
and blow your nose —

Vulgar tunes that bring the laugh that  
brings the groan—

I can rip your very heartstrings out  
with those;  
With the feasting, and the folly, and the  
fun—

And the lying, and the lusting, and the  
drink,

And the merry path that drops you, when  
you're done,

To the thoughts that burn like irons if  
you think.

With my "*Plunka-lunka-lunka-  
lunka-lunk!*"

Here's a trifle on account of  
pleasure past,

Ere the wit that made you win gives  
you eyes to see your sin

And—the heavier repentance at  
the last!

Let the organ moan her sorrow to the  
roof—

I have told the naked stars the Grief of  
Man!

Let the trumpet snare the foeman to the  
proof—

I have known Defeat, and mocked it as  
we ran!

My bray ye may not alter nor mistake  
When I stand to jeer the fatted Soul of  
Things,

But the Song of Lost Endeavour that I  
make,

Is it hidden in the twanging of the  
strings?

With my "*Ta-ra-rara-rara-ra-ra-  
rrr!*"

[Is it naught to you that hear and  
pass me by?]

But the word—the word is mine,  
when the order moves the line  
And the lean, locked ranks go  
roaring down to die!

The grandam of my grandam was the  
Lyre—

[O the blue below the little fisher-  
huts!]

That the Stealer stooping beachward  
filled with fire,

Till she bore my iron head and ringing  
guts!

By the wisdom of the centuries I speak—  
To the tune of yestermorn I set the  
truth—

I, the joy of life unquestioned— I, the  
Greek—

I, the everlasting Wonder-song of  
Youth!

With my "*tinka-tinka-tinka-tinka-  
tink!*"

[What d'ye lack, my noble masters!  
What d'ye lack?]

So I draw the world together link by  
link

Yea, from Delos up to Limerick and  
back! 1894. 1895.

### THE "MARY GLOSTER"

I've paid for your sickest fancies; I've  
humoured your crackedest whim—

Dick, it's your daddy, dying; you've got  
to listen to him!

Good for a fortnight, am I? The doctor  
told you? He lied.

I shall go under by morning, and— Put  
that nurse outside.

'Never seen death yet, Dickie? Well,  
now is your time to learn,

And you'll wish you held my record before  
it comes to your turn.

Not counting the Line and the Foundry,  
the Yards and the village, too,

I've made myself and a million; but I'm  
damned if I made you.

Master at two-and-twenty, and married  
at twenty-three—

Ten thousand men on the pay-roll, and  
forty freighters at sea!

Fifty years between 'em, and every year  
of it fight,

And now I'm Sir Anthony Gloster, dying,  
a baronite:

For I lunched with his Royal 'Ighness—  
what was it the papers had?

"Not least of our merchant-princes."  
Dickie, that's me, your dad!

I didn't begin with askings. I took my  
job and I stuck;

I took the chances they wouldn't, an' now  
they're calling it luck.

Lord, what boats I've handled— rotten  
and leaky and old—

Ran 'em, or— opened the bilge-cock,  
precisely as I was told,

Grub that 'ud bind you crazy, and crews  
 that 'ud turn you grey,  
 And a big fat lump of insurance to cover  
 the risk on the way.  
 The others they durstn't do it; they said  
 they valued their life  
 (They've served me since as skippers).  
 I went, and I took my wife.  
 Over the world I drove 'em, married at  
 twenty-three,  
 And your mother saving the money and  
 making a man of me.  
 I was content to be master, but she said  
 there was better behind;  
 She took the chances I wouldn't, and I  
 followed your mother blind.  
 She egged me to borrow the money, an'  
 she helped me to clear the loan,  
 When we bought half-shares in a cheap  
 'un and hoisted a flag of our own.  
 Patching and coaling on credit, and living  
 the Lord knew how,  
 We started the Red Ox freighters — we've  
 eight-and-thirty now.  
 And those were the days of clippers, and  
 the freights were clipper-freights,  
 And we knew we were making our fortune,  
 but she died in Macassar Straits —  
 By the Little Paternosters, as you come  
 to the Union Bank —  
 And we dropped her in fourteen fathom:  
 I pricked it off where she sank.  
 Owners we were, full owners, and the boat  
 was christened for her,  
 And she died in the *Mary Gloster*. My  
 heart, how young we were!  
 So I went on a spree round Java and well-  
 nigh ran her ashore,  
 But your mother came and warned me  
 and I wouldn't liquor no more:  
 Strict I stuck to my business, afraid to  
 stop or I'd think,  
 Saving the money (she warned me), and  
 letting the other men drink.  
 And I met M'Cullough in London (I'd  
 saved five 'undred then),  
 And 'tween us we started the Foundry —  
 three forges and twenty men.  
 Cheap repairs for the cheap 'uns. It  
 paid, and the business grew;  
 For I bought me a steam-lathe patent,  
 and that was a gold mine too.  
 "Cheaper to build 'em than buy 'em," I  
 said, but M'Cullough he shied,  
 And we wasted a year in talking before we  
 moved to the Clyde.

And the Lines were all beginning, and we  
 all of us started fair,  
 Building our engines like houses and stay-  
 ing the boilers square.  
 But M'Cullough 'e wanted cabins with  
 marble and maple and all,  
 And Brussels an' Utrecht velvet, and  
 baths and a Social Hall,  
 And pipes for closets all over, and cutting  
 the frames too light,  
 But M'Cullough he died in the Sixties,  
 and — Well, I'm dying to-  
 night. . . .  
 I knew — I knew what was coming, when  
 we bid on the *Byfleet's* keel —  
 They piddled and piffled with iron. I'd  
 given my orders for steel!  
 Steel and the first expansions. It paid,  
 I tell you, it paid,  
 When we came with our nine-knot  
 freighters and collared the long-  
 run trade!  
 And they asked me how I did it, and I  
 gave 'em the Scripture text,  
 "You keep your light so shining a little  
 in front o' the next!"  
 They copied all they could follow, but  
 they couldn't copy my mind,  
 And I left 'em sweating and stealing a  
 year and a half behind.  
 Then came the armour-contracts, but that  
 was M'Cullough's side;  
 He was always best in the Foundry, but  
 better, perhaps, he died.  
 I went through his private papers; the  
 notes was plainer than print;  
 And I'm no fool to finish if a man'll give  
 me a hint.  
 (I remember his widow was angry.) So  
 I saw what his drawings meant,  
 And I started the six-inch rollers, and it  
 paid me sixty per cent.  
 Sixty per cent *with* failures, and more  
 than twice we could do,  
 And a quarter-million to credit, and I  
 saved it all for you!  
 I thought—it doesn't matter—you  
 seemed to favour your ma,  
 But you're nearer forty than thirty, and  
 I know the kind you are.  
 Harrer an' Trinity College! I ought to  
 ha' sent you to sea —  
 But I stood you an education, an' what  
 have you done for me?  
 The things I knew was proper you  
 wouldn't thank me to give,

And the things I knew was rotten you  
 said was the way to live.  
 For you muddled with books and pictures,  
 an' china an' etchin's an' fans,  
 And your rooms at college was beastly —  
 more like a whore's than a man's;  
 Till you married that thin-flanked woman,  
 as white and as stale as a bone,  
 An' she gave you your social nonsense;  
 but where's that kid o' your own?  
 I've seen your carriages blocking the half  
 o' the Cromwell Road,  
 But never the doctor's brougham to help  
 the missus unload.  
 (So there isn't even a grandchild, an' the  
 Gloster family's done.)  
 Not like your mother, she isn't. *She*  
 carried her freight each run.  
 But they died, the pore little beggars!  
 At sea she had 'em — they died.  
 Only you, an' you stood it. You haven't  
 stood much beside.  
 Weak, a liar, and idle, and mean as a  
 collier's whelp  
 Nosing for scraps in the galley. No help  
 — my son was no help!  
 So he gets three 'undred thousand, in  
 trust and the interest paid.  
 I wouldn't give it you, Dickie — you see,  
 I made it in trade.  
 You're saved from soiling your fingers,  
 and if you have no child,  
 It all comes back to the business. 'Gad  
 won't your wife be wild!  
 'Calls and calls in her carriage, her  
 'andkerchief up to 'er eye:  
 "Daddy! dear daddy's dyin'!" and do-  
 ing her best to cry.  
 Grateful? Oh, yes, I'm grateful, but  
 keep her away from here.  
 Your mother 'ud never ha' stood 'er, and,  
 anyhow, women are queer. . . .  
 There's women will say I've married a  
 second time. Not quite!  
 But give pore Aggie a hundred, and tell  
 her your lawyers'll fight.  
 She was the best o' the boiling — you'll  
 meet her before it ends.  
 I'm in for a row with the mother — I'll  
 leave you settle my friends.  
 For a man he must go with a woman,  
 which women don't understand —  
 Or the sort that say they can see it they  
 aren't the marrying brand.  
 But I wanted to speak o' your mother  
 that's Lady Gloster still —

I'm going to up and see her, without its  
 hurting the will.  
 Here! Take your hand off the bell-pull.  
 Five thousand's waiting for you,  
 If you'll only listen a minute, and do as  
 I bid you do.  
 They'll try to prove me crazy, and, if you  
 bungle, they can;  
 And I've only you to trust to! (O God  
 why ain't it a man?)  
 There's some waste money on marbles,  
 the same as M'Cullough tried —  
 Marbles and mausoleums — but I call  
 that sinful pride.  
 There's some ship bodies for burial —  
 we've carried 'em, soldered and  
 packed;  
 Down in their wills they wrote it, and no-  
 body called *them* cracked.  
 But me — I've too much money, and  
 people might . . . All my fault:  
 It come o' hoping for grandsons and buy-  
 ing that Wokin' vault. . . .  
 I'm sick o' the 'ole dam' business. I'm  
 going back where I came.  
 Dick, you're the son o' my body, and  
 you'll take charge o' the same!  
 I want to lie by your mother, ten thou-  
 sand mile away,  
 And they'll want to send me to Woking;  
 and that's where you'll earn your  
 pay.  
 I've thought it out on the quiet, the same  
 as it ought to be done —  
 Quiet, and decent, and proper — an'  
 here's your orders, my son.  
 You know the Line? You don't, though.  
 You write to the Board, and tell  
 Your father's death has upset you an'  
 you're goin' to cruise for a spell,  
 An' you'd like the *Mary Gloster* — I've  
 held her ready for this —  
 They'll put her in working order and  
 you'll take her out as she is.  
 Yes, it was money idle when I patched  
 her and laid her aside  
 (Thank God, I can pay for my fancies!)  
 — the boat where your mother died,  
 By the Little Paternosters, as you came  
 to the Union Bank,  
 We dropped her — I think I told you —  
 and I pricked it off where she sank.  
 ['Tiny she looked on the grating — that  
 oily, treacly sea —]  
 'Hundred and Eighteen East, remember,  
 and South just Three.



Easy bearings to carry — Three South —  
 Three to the dot;  
 But I gave McAndrew a copy in case of  
 dying — or not.  
 And so you'll write to McAndrew, he's  
 Chief of the Maori Line;  
 They'll give him leave, if you ask 'em and  
 say it's business o' mine.  
 I built three boats for the Maoris, an'  
 very well pleased they were.  
 An' I've known Mac since the Fifties, and  
 Mac knew me — and her.  
 After the first stroke warned me I sent  
 him the money to keep  
 Against the time you'd claim it, com-  
 mittin' your dad to the deep;  
 For you are the son o' my body, and Mac  
 was my oldest friend,  
 I've never asked 'im to dinner, but he'll  
 see it out to the end.  
 Stiff-necked Glasgow beggar! I've  
 heard he's prayed for my soul,  
 But he couldn't lie if you paid him, and  
 he'd starve before he stole.  
 He'll take the *Mary* in ballast — you'll  
 find her a lively ship;  
 And you'll take Sir Anthony Gloster, that  
 goes on 'is wedding-trip,  
 Lashed in our old deck-cabin with all  
 three port-holes wide,  
 The kick o' the screw beneath him and  
 the round blue seas outside!  
 Sir Anthony Gloster's carriage — our  
 'ouse-flag flyin' free —  
 Ten thousand men on the pay-roll and  
 forty freighters at sea!  
 He made himself and a million, but this  
 world is a fleetin' show,  
 And he'll go to the wife of 'is bosom the  
 same as he ought to go —  
 By the heel of the Paternosters — there  
 isn't a chance to mistake —  
 And Mac'll pay you the money as soon as  
 the bubbles break!  
 Five thousand for six weeks' cruising, the  
 staunchest freighter afloat,  
 And Mac he'll give you your bonus the  
 minute I'm out o' the boat!  
 He'll take you round to Macassar, and  
 you'll come back alone;  
 He knows what I want o' the *Mary*. . . .  
 I'll do what I please with my own.  
 Your mother 'ud call it wasteful, but I've  
 seven-and-thirty more;  
 I'll come in my private carriage and bid it  
 wait at the door. . . .

For my son 'e was never a credit: 'e  
 muddled with books and art,  
 And 'e lived on Sir Anthony's money and  
 'e broke Sir Anthony's heart.  
 There isn't even a grandchild, and the  
 Gloster family' done —  
 The only one you left me — O mother, the  
 only one!  
 Harrer and Trinity College — me slavin'  
 early an' late —  
 An' he thinks I'm dying crazy, and you're  
 in Macassar Strait!  
 Flesh o' my flesh, my dearie, for ever an'  
 ever amen,  
 That first stroke come for a warning.  
 I ought o ha' gone to you then.  
 But — cheap repairs for a cheap 'un —  
 the doctors said I'd do.  
 Mary, why didn't you warn me? I've  
 allus heeded to you,  
 Excep' — I know — about women; but  
 you are a spirit now;  
 An', wife, they was only women, and I  
 was a man. That's how.  
 An' a man 'e must go with a woman, as  
 you *could* not understand;  
 But I never talked 'em secrets. I paid  
 'em out o' hand.  
 Thank Gawd, I can pay for my fancies!  
 Now what's five thousand to me,  
 For a berth off the Paternosters in the  
 haven where I would be?  
 I believe in the Resurrection, if I read my  
 Bible plain,  
 But I wouldn't trust 'em at Wokin';  
 we're safer at sea again.  
 For the heart it shall go with the treasure  
 — go down to the sea in ships.  
 I'm sick of the hired women. I'll kiss my  
 girl on her lips!  
 I'll be content with my fountain. I'll  
 drink from my own well,  
 And the wife of my youth shall charm  
 me — an' the rest can go to Hell!  
 (Dickie, *he* will, that's certain.) I'll lie  
 in our standin'-bed,  
 An' Mac'll take her in ballast — an' she  
 trims best by the head. . . .  
 Down by the head an' sinkin', her fires  
 are drawn and cold,  
 And the water's splashin' hollow on the  
 skin of the empty hold —  
 Churning an' choking and chuckling,  
 quiet and scummy and dark —  
 Full to her lower hatches and risin' steady.  
 Hark!



That was the after-bulkhead. . . . She's  
flooded from stern to stern. . . .  
'Never seen death yet, Dickie? . . .  
Well, now is your time to learn!  
1894? 1896.

## THE LADIES

I've taken my fun where I've found it;  
I've rogued an' I've ranged in my time;  
I've 'ad my pickin' o' sweethearts,  
An' four o' the lot was prime.  
One was an 'arf-caste widow,  
One was a woman at Prome,  
One was the wife of a *jemadar-sais*,<sup>1</sup>  
An' one is a girl at 'ome.

*Now I aren't no 'and with the ladies,  
For, takin' 'em all along,  
You never can say till you've tried 'em,  
An' then you are like to be wrong.  
There's times when you'll think that you  
mightn't,  
There's times when you'll know that you  
might;  
But the things you will learn from the Yellow  
an' Brown,  
They'll 'elp you a lot with the White!*

I was a young un at 'Oogli,  
Shy as a girl to begin;  
Aggie de Castrer she made me,  
An' Aggie was clever as sin;  
Older than me, but my first un —  
More like a mother she were —  
Showed me the way to promotion an' pay,  
An' I learned about women from 'er!

Then I was ordered to Burma,  
Actin' in charge o' Bazar,  
An' I got me a tiddy live 'eathen  
Through buyin' supplies off 'er pa.  
Funny an' yellow an' faithful —  
Doll in a teacup she were —  
But we lived on the square, like a true-  
married pair,  
An' I learned about women from 'er!

Then we was shifted to Neemuch  
(Or I might ha' been keepin' 'er now),  
An' I took with a shiny she-devil,  
The wife of a nigger at Mhow;  
'Taught me the gipsy-folks' *bole*; <sup>2</sup>  
Kind o' volcano she were,

<sup>1</sup> Head-groom.<sup>2</sup> Slang.

For she knifed me one night 'cause I wished  
she was white,  
And I learned about women from 'er!

Then I come 'ome in a trooper,  
'Long of a kid o' sixteen —  
'Girl from a convent at Meerut,  
The straightest I ever 'ave seen.  
Love at first sight was 'er trouble,  
She didn't know what it were;  
An' I wouldn't do such, 'cause I liked 'er  
too much,  
But — I learned about women from 'er!

I've taken my fun where I've found it,  
An' now I must pay for my fun,  
For the more you 'ave known o' the others  
The less will you settle to one;  
An' the end of it's sittin' and thinkin',  
An' dreamin' Hell-fires to see;  
So be warned by my lot (which I know  
you will not),  
An' learn about women from me!

*What did the Colonel's Lady think?  
Nobody never knew.  
Somebody asked the Sergeant's Wife,  
An' she told 'em true!  
When you get to a man in the case,  
They're like as a row of pins —  
For the Colonel's Lady an' Judy O'Grady  
Are sisters under their skins!*

1896.

## RECESSIONAL

God of our fathers, known of old,  
Lord of our far-flung battle-line,  
Beneath whose awful Hand we hold  
Dominion over palm and pine —  
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,  
Lest we forget — lest we forget!

The tumult and the shouting dies;  
The Captains and the Kings depart:  
Still stands Thine ancient sacrifice,  
An humble and a contrite heart.  
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,  
Lest we forget — lest we forget!

Far-called, our navies melt away;  
On dune and headland sinks the fire:  
Lo, all our pomp of yesterday  
Is one with Nineveh and Tyre!  
Judge of the Nations, spare us yet,  
Lest we forget — lest we forget!

If, drunk with sight of power, we loose  
 Wild tongues that have not Thee in  
     awe,  
 Such boastings as the Gentiles use,  
 Or lesser breeds without the Law —  
 Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,  
 Lest we forget — lest we forget!

For heathen heart that puts her trust  
 In reeking tube and iron shard,  
 All valiant dust that builds on dust,  
 And guarding, calls not Thee to guard,  
 For frantic boast and foolish word —  
 Thy mercy on Thy people, Lord!

1897.

## THE WHITE MAN'S BURDEN

TAKE up the White Man's burden —  
 Send forth the best ye breed —  
 Go bind your sons to exile  
 To serve your captives' need;  
 To wait in heavy harness,  
 On fluttered folk and wild —  
 Your new-caught, sullen peoples,  
 Half-devil and half-child.

Take up the White Man's burden —  
 In patience to abide,  
 To veil the threat of terror  
 And check the show of pride;  
 By open speech and simple,  
 An hundred times made plain,  
 To seek another's profit,  
 And work another's gain.

Take up the White Man's burden —  
 The savage wars of peace —  
 Fill full the mouth of Famine  
 And bid the sickness cease;  
 And when your goal is nearest  
 The end for others sought,  
 Watch Sloth and heathen Folly  
 Bring all your hope to nought.

Take up the White Man's burden —  
 No tawdry rule of kings,  
 But toil of serf and sweeper —  
 The tale of common things.  
 The ports ye shall not enter,  
 The roads ye shall not tread,  
 Go make them with your living,  
 And mark them with your dead.

Take up the White Man's burden —  
 And reap his old reward:

The blame of those ye better,  
 The hate of those ye guard —  
 The cry of hosts ye humour  
 (Ah, slowly!) toward the light: —  
 "Why brought ye us from bondage,  
 "Our loved Egyptian night?"

Take up the White Man's burden —  
 Ye dare not stoop to less —  
 Nor call too loud on Freedom  
 To cloak your weariness;  
 By all ye cry or whisper,  
 By all ye leave or do,  
 The silent, sullen peoples  
 Shall weigh your Gods and you.

Take up the White Man's burden —  
 Have done with childish days —  
 The lightly proffered laurel,  
 The easy, ungrudged praise.  
 Comes now, to search your manhood  
 Through all the thankless years,  
 Cold, edged with dear-bought wisdom,  
 The judgment of your peers!

1899.

M. I.

*(Mounted Infantry of the Line)*

I WISH my mother could see me now, with  
 a fence-post under my arm,  
 And a knife and a spoon in my putties  
 that I found on a Boer farm,  
 Atop of a sore-backed Argentine, with a  
 thirst that you couldn't buy.  
 I used to be in the Yorkshires once  
 (Sussex, Lincolns, and Rifles once),  
 Hampshires, Glosters, and Scottish once!  
 (*ad lib.*)

But now I am M. I.

That is what we are known as — that is  
 the name you must call  
 If you want officers' servants, pickets an'  
 'orseguards an' all —  
 Details for buryin'-parties, company-  
 cooks or supply —  
 Turn out the Chronic Ikonas! Roll up  
 the ——<sup>1</sup> M. I.!

My 'ands are spotty with veldt-sores, my  
 shirt is a button an' frill,  
 An' the things I've used my bay'nit for  
 would make a tinker ill!

<sup>1</sup> Number according to taste and service of audience.

An' I don't know whose damn' column  
I'm in, nor where we're trekkin'  
nor why.

I've trekked from the Vaal to the  
Orange once —

From the Vaal to the greasy Pongolo  
once —

(Or else it was called the Zambesi once) —  
For now I am M. I.

That is what we are known as — we are  
the push you require

For outposts all night under freezin', an'  
rearguard all day under fire.

Anything 'ot or unwholesome? Any-  
thing dusty or dry?

Borrow a bunch of Ikonas! Trot out  
the — M. I.!

Our Sergeant-Major's a subaltern, our  
Captain's a Fusilier —

Our Adjutant's "late of Somebody's  
'Orse," an' a Melbourne auction-  
eer;

But you couldn't spot us at 'arf a mile  
from the crackest caval-ry.

They used to talk about Lancers once,  
Hussars, Dragoons, an' Lancers once,

'Elmets, pistols, an' carbines once,  
But now we are M.I.!

That is what we are known as — we are the  
orphans they blame

For beggin' the loan of an 'ead-stall an'  
makin' a mount to the same.

'Can't even look at their 'orselines but  
some one goes bellerin' "Hi!

"'Ere comes a burglin' Ikona!" Foot-  
sack you — M. I.!

We're trekkin' our twenty miles a day an'  
bein' loved by the Dutch,

But we don't hold on by the mane no  
more, nor lose our stirrups — much;

An' we scout with a senior man in charge  
where the 'oly white flags fly.

We used to think they were friendly  
once,

Didn't take any precautions once  
(Once, my ducky, an' only once!)

But now we are M. I.!

That is what we are known as — we are  
the beggars that got

Three days "to learn equitation," an'  
six months o' bloomin' well trot!

Cow-guns, an' cattle, an' convoys — an'  
Mister De Wet on the fly —

We are the rollin' Ikonas! We are the —  
M. I.

The new fat regiments come from home,  
imaginin' vain V. C.'s

(The same as your talky-fighty men which  
are often Number Threes<sup>1</sup>),

But our words o' command are "Scatter"  
an' "Close" an' "Let your wounded  
lie."

We used to rescue 'em noble once, —  
Givin' the range as we raised 'em  
once —

Gettin' 'em killed as we saved 'em  
once —

But now we are M. I.

That is what we are known as — we are  
the lanterns you view

After a fight round the kopjes, lookin' for  
men that we knew;

Whistlin' an' callin' together, 'altin' to  
catch the reply: —

"'Elp me! O 'elp me, Ikonas! This way,  
the — M. I.!"

I wish my mother could see me now,  
a-gatherin' news on my own,

When I ride like a General up to the scrub  
and ride back like Tod Sloan,

Remarkable close to my 'orse's neck to  
let the shots go by.

We used to fancy it risky once  
(Called it a reconnaissance once),

Under the charge of an orf'cer once,  
But now we are M. I.!

That is what we are known as — that is  
the song you must say

When you want men to be Mausered at  
one and a penny a day;

We are no five-bob Colonials — we are the  
'ome-made supply,

Ask for the London Ikonas! Ring up the  
— M. I.!

I wish myself could talk to myself as I  
left 'im a year ago;

I could tell 'im a lot that would save 'im a  
lot on the things that 'e ought to  
know!

<sup>1</sup> Horse-holders when in action, and therefore generally under cover.

When I think o' that ignorant barrick-bird,  
 it almost makes me cry.  
 I used to belong in an Army once  
 (Gawd! what a rum little Army once),  
 Red little, dead little Army once!  
 But now I am M. I.!

That is what we are known as — we are  
 the men that have been  
 Over a year at this business, smelt it an'  
 felt it an' seen.  
 We 'ave got 'old of the needful — you will  
 be told by and by;  
 Wait till you've 'eard the Ikonas, spoke  
 to the old M. I.!

*Mount — march, Ikonas! Stand to your  
 'orses again!*  
*Mop off the frost on the saddles, mop up the  
 miles on the plain.*  
*Out goes the stars in the dawnin', up goes  
 our dust to the sky,*  
*Walk — trot, Ikonas! Trek jou,<sup>1</sup> the old  
 M. I.!*

1901.

## THE ISLANDERS

*No doubt but ye are the People — your  
 throne is above the King's.*  
*Whoso speaks in your presence must say  
 acceptable things:*  
*Bowing the head in worship, bending the  
 knee in fear —*  
*Bringing the word well smoothen — such  
 as a King should hear.*

Fenced by your careful fathers, ringed by  
 your leaden seas,  
 Long did ye wake in quiet and long lie  
 down at ease;  
 Till ye said of Strife, "What is it?" of  
 the Sword, "It is far from our  
 ken";  
 Till ye made a sport of your shrunken  
 hosts and a toy of your armed men.  
 Ye stopped your ears to the warning —  
 ye would neither look nor heed —  
 Ye set your leisure before their toil and  
 your lusts above their need.  
 Because of your witless learning and your  
 beasts of warren and chase,  
 Ye grudged your sons to their service and  
 your fields for their camping-place.

<sup>1</sup> Get ahead.

Ye forced them to glean in the highways  
 the straw for the bricks they  
 brought;  
 Ye forced them follow in byways the craft  
 that ye never taught.  
 Ye hampered and hindered and crippled;  
 ye thrust out of sight and away  
 Those that would serve you for honour  
 and those that served you for pay.  
 Then were the judgments loosened: then  
 was your shame revealed,  
 At the hands of a little people, few but apt  
 in the field.  
 Yet ye were saved by a remnant (and  
 your land's long-suffering star),  
 When your strong men cheered in their  
 millions while your striplings went  
 to the war.  
 Sons of the sheltered city — unmade,  
 unhandled, unmeet —  
 Ye pushed them raw to the battle as ye  
 picked them raw from the street.  
 And what did ye look they should compass?  
 Warcraft learned in a breath,  
 Knowledge unto occasion at the first far  
 view of Death?  
 So? And ye train your horses and the  
 dogs ye feed and prize?  
 How are the beasts more worthy than the  
 souls, your sacrifice?  
 But ye said, "Their valour shall show  
 them"; but ye said, "The end is  
 close."  
 And ye sent them comfits and pictures  
 to help them harry your foes:  
 And ye vaunted your fathomless power,  
 and ye flaunted your iron pride,  
 Ere — ye fawned on the Younger Nations  
 for the men who could shoot and  
 ride!  
 Then ye returned to your trinkets; then  
 ye contented your souls  
 With the flannelled fools at the wicket or  
 the muddled oafs at the goals.  
 Given to strong delusion, wholly believ-  
 ing a lie,  
 Ye saw that the land lay fenceless, and  
 ye let the months go by  
 Waiting some easy wonder, hoping some  
 saving sign —  
 Idle — openly idle — in the lee of the  
 forespent Line.  
 Idle — except for your boasting — and  
 what is your boasting worth  
 If ye grudge a year of service to the lord-  
 liest life on earth?



Ancient, effortless, ordered, cycle on cycle  
 set,  
 Life so long untroubled, that ye who  
 inherit forget  
 It was not made with the mountains, it is  
 not one with the deep.  
 Men, not gods, devised it. Men, not  
 gods, must keep.  
 Men, not children, servants, or kinsfolk  
 called from afar,  
 But each man born in the Island broke to  
 the matter of war.  
 Soberly and by custom taken and trained  
 for the same,  
 Each man born in the Island entered at  
 youth to the game—  
 As it were almost cricket, not to be  
 mastered in haste,  
 But after trial and labour, by temperance,  
 living chaste.  
 As it were almost cricket—as it were  
 even your play,  
 Weighed and pondered and worshipped,  
 and practiced day and day.  
 So ye shall bide sure-guarded when the  
 restless lightnings wake  
 In the womb of the blotting war-cloud,  
 and the pallid nations quake.  
 So, at the haggard trumpets, instant your  
 soul shall leap  
 Forthright, accoutred, accepting—alert  
 from the wells of sleep.  
 So at the threat ye shall summon—so  
 at the need ye shall send  
 Men, not children or servants, tempered  
 and taught to the end;  
 Cleansed of servile panic, slow to dread or  
 despise,  
 Humble because of knowledge, mighty  
 by sacrifice. . . .  
 But ye say, "It will mar our comfort."  
 Ye say, "It will minish our trade."  
 Do ye wait for the spattered shrapnel ere  
 ye learn how a gun is laid?  
 For the low, red glare to southward when  
 the raided coast-towns burn?  
 (Light ye shall have on that lesson, but  
 little time to learn.)  
 Will ye pitch some white pavilion, and  
 lustily even the odds,  
 With nets and hoops and mallets, with  
 rackets and bats and rods?  
 Will the rabbit war with your foemen—  
 the red deer horn them for hire?  
 Your kept cock-pheasant keep you?—  
 he is master of many a shire.

Arid, aloof, incurious, unthinking, un-  
 thanking, gelt,  
 Will ye loose your schools to flout them  
 till their brow-beat columns melt?  
 Will ye pray them or preach them, or  
 print them, or ballot them back  
 from your shore?  
 Will your workmen issue a mandate to  
 bid them strike no more?  
 Will ye rise and dethrone your rulers?  
 (Because ye were idle both?  
 Pride by Insolence chastened? Indo-  
 lence purged by Sloth?)  
 No doubt but ye are the People; who  
 shall make you afraid?  
 Also your gods are many; no doubt but  
 your gods shall aid.  
 Idols of greasy altars built for the body's  
 ease;  
 Proud little brazen Baals and talking  
 fetishes;  
 Teraphs of sept and party and wise wood-  
 pavement gods—  
*These* shall come down to the battle and  
 snatch you from under the rods?  
 From the gusty, flickering gun-roll with  
 viewless salvoes rent,  
 And the pitted hail of the bullets that tell  
 not whence they were sent.  
 When ye are ringed as with iron, when ye  
 are scourged as with whips,  
 When the meat is yet in your belly, and  
 the boast is yet on your lips;  
 When ye go forth at morning and the  
 moon beholds you broke,  
 Ere ye lie down at even, your remnant,  
 under the yoke?

*No doubt but ye are the People — absolute,  
 strong, and wise;  
 Whatever your heart has desired ye have not  
 withheld from your eyes.  
 On your own heads, in your own hands,  
 the sin and the saving lies!*

1902.

## CHANT-PAGAN

*(English Irregular, discharged)*

ME that 'ave been what I've been —  
 Me that 'ave gone where I've gone —  
 Me that 'ave seen what I've seen —  
 'Ow can I ever take on  
 With awful old England again,



An' 'ouses both sides of the street,  
 And 'edges two sides of the lane,  
 And the parson an' gentry between,  
 An' touchin' my 'at when we meet —  
 Me that 'ave been what I've been?

Me that 'ave watched 'arf a world  
 'Eave up all shiny with dew,  
 Kopje on kop to the sun,  
 An' as soon as the mist let 'em through  
 Our 'elios winkin' like fun —  
 Three sides of a ninety-mile square,  
 Over valleys as big as a shire —  
*"Are ye there? Are ye there? Are ye there?"*

An' then the blind drum of our fire . . .  
 An' I'm rollin' 'is lawns for the Squire,  
 Me!

Me that 'ave rode through the dark  
 Forty mile, often, on end,  
 Along the Ma'ollisberg Range,  
 With only the stars for my mark  
 An' only the night for my friend,  
 An' things runnin' off as you pass,  
 An' things jumpin' up in the grass,  
 An' the silence, the shine an' the size  
 Of the 'igh, unexpressible skies —  
 I am takin' some letters almost  
 As much as a mile to the post,  
 An' "mind you come back with the  
 change!" Me!

Me that saw Barberton took  
 When we dropped through the clouds on  
 their 'ead,  
 An' they 'ove the guns over and fled —  
 Me that was through Di'mond 'Ill,  
 An' Pieters an' Springs an' Belfast —  
 From Dundee to Vereeniging all —  
 Me that stuck out to the last  
 (An' five bloomin' bars on my chest) —  
 I am doin' my Sunday-school best,  
 By the 'elp of the Squire an' 'is wife  
 (Not to mention the 'ousemaid an' cook),  
 To come in an' 'ands up an' be still,  
 An' honestly work for my bread,  
 My livin' in that state of life  
 To which it shall please God to call  
 Me!

Me that 'ave followed my trade  
 In the place where the Lightnin's are  
 made;  
 'Twixt the Rains and the Sun and the  
 Moon —

Me that lay down an' got up  
 Three years with the sky for my roof —  
 That 'ave ridden my 'unger an' thirst  
 Six thousand raw mile on the hoof,  
 With the Vaal and the Orange for cup,  
 An' the Brandwater Basin for dish, —  
 Oh! it's 'ard to be 'ave as they wish  
 (Too 'ard, an' a little too soon),  
 I'll 'ave to think over it first —  
 Me!

I will arise an' get 'ence —  
 I will trek South and make sure  
 If it's only my fancy or not  
 That the sunshine of England is pale,  
 And the breezes of England are stale,  
 An' there's somethin' gone small with the  
 lot.

For I know of a sun an' a wind,  
 An' some plains and a mountain be'ind,  
 An' some graves by a barb-wire fence,  
 An' a Dutchman I've fought 'oo might  
 give

Me a job were I ever inclined  
 To look in an' offsaddle an' live  
 Where there's neither a road nor a tree —  
 But only my Maker an' me,  
 And I think it will kill me or cure,  
 So I think I will go there an' see.

Me!  
 1903.

## BOOTS

### (Infantry Columns)

WE'RE foot — slog — slog — slog — slog —  
 gin' over Africa!

Foot — foot — foot — foot — sloggin'  
 over Africa —

(Boots — boots — boots — boots — movin'  
 up and down again!)  
 There's no discharge in the war!

Seven — six — eleven — five — nine-an'-  
 twenty mile to-day —

Four — eleven — seventeen — thirty-two  
 the day before —

(Boots — boots — boots — boots — movin'  
 up and down again!)

There's no discharge in the war!

Don't — don't — don't — don't — look at  
 what's in front of you.

(Boots — boots — boots — boots — movin'  
 up an' down again);

Men — men — men — men — men go  
 mad with watchin' 'em,  
 An' there's no discharge in the  
 war!

Try — try — try — try — to think o'  
 something different —  
 Oh — my — God — keep — me from  
 goin' lunatic!  
 (Boots — boots — boots — boots — movin'  
 up an' down again!)  
 There's no discharge in the war!

Count — count — count — count — the  
 bullets in the bandoliers.  
 If — your — eyes — drop — they will get  
 atop o' you!  
 (Boots — boots — boots — boots — movin'  
 up an' down again) —  
 There's no discharge in the war!

We — can — stick — out — 'unger, thirst,  
 an' weariness,  
 But — not — not — not — not the chronic  
 sight of 'em —  
 (Boots — boots — boots — boots — movin'  
 up an' down again.)  
 An' there's no discharge in the  
 war!

'Tain't — so — bad — by — day because  
 o' company,  
 But night — brings — long — strings — o'  
 forty thousand million  
 Boots — boots — boots — boots — movin'  
 up an' down again.  
 There's no discharge in the war!

I — 'ave — marched — six — weeks in  
 'Ell an' certify  
 It — is — not — fire — devils, dark, or  
 anything,  
 But boots — boots — boots — boots —  
 movin' up an' down again,  
 An' there's no discharge in the  
 war!

1903.

IF —

If you can keep your head when all about  
 you  
 Are losing theirs and blaming it on you,  
 If you can trust yourself when all men  
 doubt you,  
 But make allowance for their doubting  
 too;

If you can wait and not be tired by wait-  
 ing,  
 Or being lied about, don't deal in lies,  
 Or being hated don't give way to hating,  
 And yet don't look too good, nor talk  
 too wise:

If you can dream — and not make dreams  
 your master;  
 If you can think — and not make  
 thoughts your aim,  
 If you can meet with Triumph and Dis-  
 aster  
 And treat those two impostors just the  
 same;  
 If you can bear to hear the truth you've  
 spoken  
 Twisted by knaves to make a trap for  
 fools,  
 Or watch the things you gave your life to,  
 broken,  
 And stoop and build 'em up with worn-  
 out tools:

If you can make one heap of all your  
 winnings  
 And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-  
 toss,  
 And lose, and start again at your begin-  
 nings  
 And never breathe a word about your  
 loss;  
 If you can force your heart and nerve and  
 sinew  
 To serve your turn long after they are  
 gone,  
 And so hold on when there is nothing in  
 you  
 Except the Will which says to them:  
 "Hold on!"

If you can talk with crowds and keep  
 your virtue,  
 Or walk with Kings — nor lose the  
 common touch,  
 If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt  
 you,  
 If all men count with you, but none  
 too much;  
 If you can fill the unforgiving minute  
 With sixty seconds' worth of distance  
 run,  
 Yours is the Earth and everything that's  
 in it,  
 And — which is more — you'll be a  
 Man, my son!

1910.

## THE FEMALE OF THE SPECIES

WHEN the Himalayan peasant meets the  
 he-bear in his pride,  
 He shouts to scare the monster, who will  
 often turn aside.  
 But the she-bear thus accosted rends the  
 peasant tooth and nail.  
 For the female of the species is more  
 deadly than the male.

When Nag the basking cobra hears the  
 careless foot of man,  
 He will sometimes wriggle sideways and  
 avoid it if he can.  
 But his mate makes no such motion where  
 she camps beside the trail.  
 For the female of the species is more  
 deadly than the male.

When the early Jesuit fathers preached to  
 Hurons and Choctaws,  
 They prayed to be delivered from the  
 vengeance of the squaws.  
 'Twas the women, not the warriors,  
 turned those stark enthusiasts pale.  
 For the female of the species is more deadly  
 than the male.

Man's timid heart is bursting with the  
 things he must not say,  
 For the Woman that God gave him isn't  
 his to give away;  
 But when hunter meets with husband,  
 each confirms the other's tale—  
 The female of the species is more deadly  
 than the male.

Man, a bear in most relations—worm  
 and savage otherwise,—  
 Man propounds negotiations, Man ac-  
 cepts the compromise.  
 Very rarely will he squarely push the logic  
 of a fact  
 To its ultimate conclusion in unmitigated  
 act.

Fear, or foolishness, impels him, ere he lay  
 the wicked low,  
 To concede some form of trial even to his  
 fiercest foe.  
 Mirth obscene diverts his anger—Doubt  
 and Pity oft perplex  
 Him in dealing with an issue—to the  
 scandal of The Sex!

But the Woman that God gave him, every  
 fibre of her frame  
 Proves her launched for one sole issue,  
 armed and engined for the same;  
 And to serve that single issue, lest the  
 generations fail,  
 The female of the species must be deadlier  
 than the male.

She who faces Death by torture for each  
 life beneath her breast  
 May not deal in doubt or pity—must  
 not swerve for fact or jest.  
 These be purely male diversions— not in  
 these her honour dwells.  
 She the Other Law we live by, is that Law  
 and nothing else.

She can bring no more to living than the  
 powers that make her great  
 As the Mother of the Infant and the Mis-  
 tress of the Mate.  
 And when Babe and Man are lacking and  
 she strides unclaimed to claim  
 Her right as femme (and baron), her  
 equipment is the same.

She is wedded to convictions—in default  
 of grosser ties:  
 Her contentions are her children, Heaven  
 help him who denies!—  
 He will meet no suave discussion, but the  
 instant, white-hot, wild,  
 Wakened female of the species warring as  
 for spouse and child.

Unprovoked and awful charges—even  
 so the she-bear fights,  
 Speech that drips, corrodes, and poisons  
 —even so the cobra bites.  
 Scientific vivisection of one nerve till it is  
 raw  
 And the victim writhes in anguish—like  
 the Jesuit with the squaw!

So it comes that Man, the coward, when  
 he gathers to confer  
 With his fellow-braves in council, dare not  
 leave a place for her  
 Where, at war with Life and Conscience,  
 he uplifts his erring hands  
 To some God of Abstract Justice—which  
 no woman understands.

And Man knows it! Knows, moreover,  
that the Woman that God gave  
him

Must command but may not govern —  
shall enthrall but not enslave him. v

And *She* knows, because She warns him,  
and Her instincts never fail,  
That the Female of Her Species is more  
deadly than the Male.

1911.

# HOUSMAN

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# HOUSMAN

## FROM A SHROPSHIRE LAD

### II

LOVELIEST of trees, the cherry now  
Is hung with bloom along the bough,  
And stands about the woodland ride  
Wearing white for Eastertide.

Now, of my threescore years and ten,  
Twenty will not come again,  
And take from seventy springs a score,  
It only leaves me fifty more.

And since to look at things in bloom  
Fifty springs are little room,  
About the woodlands I will go  
To see the cherry hung with snow.

### IV

#### REVEILLE

WAKE : the silver dusk returning  
Up the beach of darkness brims,  
And the ship of sunrise burning  
Strands upon the eastern rims.

Wake : the vaulted shadow shatters,  
Trampled to the floor it spanned,  
And the tent of night in tatters  
Straws the sky-pavilioned land.

Up, lad, up, 'tis late for lying :  
Hear the drums of morning play !  
Hark, the empty highways crying  
"Who'll beyond the hills away?"

Towns and countries woo together,  
Forelands beacon, belfries call ;  
Never lad that trod on leather  
Lived to feast his heart with all.

Up, lad : thews that lie and cumber  
Sunlit pallets never thrive ;  
Morns abed and daylight slumber  
Were not meant for man alive.

Clay lies still, but blood's a rover ;  
Breath's a ware that will not keep.  
Up, lad : when the journey's over  
There'll be time enough to sleep.

### IX

ON moonlit heath and lonesome bank  
The sheep beside me graze ;  
And yon the gallows used to clank  
Fast by the four cross ways.

A careless shepherd once would keep  
The flocks by moonlight there,<sup>1</sup>  
And high amongst the glimmering sheep  
The dead man stood on air.

They hang us now in Shrewsbury jail :  
The whistles blow forlorn,  
And trains all night groan on the rail  
To men that die at morn.

There sleeps in Shrewsbury jail to-night,  
Or wakes, as may betide,  
A better lad, if things went right,  
Than most that sleep outside.

And naked to the hangman's noose  
The morning clocks will ring  
A neck God made for other use  
Than strangling in a string.

And sharp the link of life will snap,  
And dead on air will stand  
Heels that held up as straight a chap  
As treads upon the land.

So here I'll watch the night and wait  
To see the morning shine,  
When he will hear the stroke of eight  
And not the stroke of nine ;

And wish my friend as sound a sleep  
As lads' I did not know,  
That shepherded the moonlit sheep  
A hundred years ago.

<sup>1</sup> Hanging in chains was called keeping sheep by moonlight.

## XIII

WHEN I was one-and-twenty  
 I heard a wise man say,  
 "Give crowns and pounds and guineas  
 But not your heart away;  
 Give pearls away and rubies  
 But keep your fancy free."  
 But I was one-and-twenty,  
 No use to talk to me.

When I was one-and-twenty  
 I heard him say again,  
 "The heart out of the bosom  
 Was never given in vain;  
 'Tis paid with sighs a plenty  
 And sold for endless rue."  
 And I am two-and-twenty,  
 And oh, 'tis true, 'tis true.

## XIX

## TO AN ATHLETE DYING YOUNG

THE time you won your town the race  
 We chaired you through the market-place;  
 Man and boy stood cheering by,  
 And home we brought you shoulder-high.

To-day, the road all runners come,  
 Shoulder-high we bring you home,  
 And set you at your threshold down,  
 Townsman of a stiller town.

Smart lad, to slip betimes away  
 From fields where glory does not stay  
 And early though the laurel grows  
 It withers quicker than the rose.

Eyes the shady night has shut  
 Cannot see the record cut,  
 And silence sounds no worse than cheers  
 After earth has stopped the ears:

Now you will not swell the rout  
 Of lads that wore their honors out,  
 Runners whom renown outran  
 And the name died before the man.

So set, before its echoes fade,  
 The fleet foot on the sill of shade,  
 And hold to the low lintel up  
 The still-defended challenge-cup.

And round that early-laurelled head  
 Will flock to gaze the strengthless dead,  
 And find unwithered on its curls  
 The garland briefer than a girl's.

## XXI

BREDON<sup>1</sup> HILL

IN summertime on Bredon  
 The bells they sound so clear;  
 Round both the shires they ring them  
 In steeples far and near,  
 A happy noise to hear.

Here of a Sunday morning  
 My love and I would lie,  
 And see the colored counties,  
 And hear the larks so high  
 About us in the sky.

The bells would ring to call her  
 In valleys miles away:  
 "Come all to church, good people;  
 Good people, come and pray."  
 But here my love would stay.

And I would turn and answer  
 Among the springing thyme,  
 "Oh, peal upon our wedding,  
 And we will hear the chime,  
 And come to church in time."

But when the snows at Christmas  
 On Bredon top were strown,  
 My love rose up so early  
 And stole out unbeknown  
 And went to church alone.

They tolled the one bell only,  
 Groom there was none to see,  
 The mourners followed after,  
 And so to church went she,  
 And would not wait for me.

The bells they sound on Bredon,  
 And still the steeples hum.  
 "Come all to church, good people," —  
 Oh, noisy bells, be dumb;  
 I hear you, I will come.

## XXIV

SAY, lad, have you things to do?  
 Quick then, while your day's at prime.  
 Quick, and if 'tis work for two,  
 Here am I, man: now's your time.

Send me now, and I shall go;  
 Call me, I shall hear you call;  
 Use me ere they lay me low  
 Where a man's no use at all;

<sup>1</sup> Pronounced Breedon.

Ere the wholesome flesh decay,  
And the willing nerve be numb,  
And the lips lack breath to say,  
"No, my lad, I cannot come."

XXV

THIS time of year a twelvemonth past,  
When Fred and I would meet,  
We needs must jangle, till at last  
We fought and I was beat.

So then the summer fields about,  
Till rainy days began,  
Rose Harland on her Sundays out  
Walked with the better man.

The better man she walks with still,  
Though now 'tis not with Fred.  
A lad that lives and has his will  
Is worth a dozen dead.

Fred keeps the house all kinds of weather,  
And clay's the house he keeps;  
When Rose and I walk out together  
Stock-still lies Fred and sleeps.

XXVI

ALONG the field as we came by  
A year ago, my love and I,  
The aspen over stile and stone  
Was talking to itself alone.  
"Oh who are these that kiss and pass?  
A country lover and his lass;  
Two lovers looking to be wed;  
And time shall put them both to bed,  
But she shall lie with earth above,  
And he beside another love."

And sure enough beneath the tree  
There walks another love with me,  
And overhead the aspen heaves  
Its rainy-sounding silver leaves;  
And I spell nothing in their stir,  
But now perhaps they speak to her,  
And plain for her to understand  
They talk about a time at hand  
When I shall sleep with clover clad,  
And she beside another lad.

XXVII

"Is my team ploughing,  
That I was used to drive  
And hear the harness jingle  
When I was man alive?"

Ay, the horses trample,  
The harness jingles now;  
No change though you lie under  
The land you used to plough.

"Is football playing  
Along the river shore,  
With lads to chase the leather,  
Now I stand up no more?"

Ay, the ball is flying,  
The lads play heart and soul;  
The goal stands up, the keeper  
Stands up to keep the goal.

"Is my girl happy,  
That I thought hard to leave,  
And has she tired of weeping  
As she lies down at eve?"

Ay, she lies down lightly,  
She lies not down to weep:  
Your girl is well contented.  
Be still, my lad, and sleep.

"Is my friend hearty,  
Now I am thin and pine,  
And has he found to sleep in  
A better bed than mine?"

Yes, lad, I lie easy,  
I lie as lads would choose;  
I cheer a dead man's sweetheart,  
Never ask me whose.

XXXV

ON the idle hill of summer,  
Sleepy with the flow of streams,  
Far I hear the steady drummer  
Drumming like a noise in dreams.

Far and near and low and louder  
On the roads of earth go by,  
Dear to friends and food for powder,  
Soldiers marching, all to die.

East and west on fields forgotten  
Bleach the bones of comrades slain,  
Lovely lads and dead and rotten;  
None that go return again.

Far the calling bugles hollo,  
High the screaming fife replies,  
Gay the files of scarlet follow:  
Woman bore me, I will rise.

## XXXVII

As through the wild green hills of Wyre  
 The train ran, changing sky and shire,  
 And far behind, a fading crest,  
 Low in the forsaken west  
 Sank the high-reared head of Clee,  
 My hand lay empty on my knee.  
 Aching on my knee it lay :  
 That morning half a shire away  
 So many an honest fellow's fist  
 Had well-nigh wrung it from the wrist.  
 Hand, said I, since now we part  
 From fields and men we know by heart,  
 For strangers' faces, strangers' lands, —  
 Hand, you have held true fellows' hands.  
 Be clean then ; rot before you do  
 A thing they'd not believe of you.  
 You and I must keep from shame  
 In London streets the Shropshire name ;  
 On banks of Thames they must not say  
 Severn breeds worse men than they ;  
 And friends abroad must bear in mind  
 Friends at home they leave behind.  
 Oh, I shall be stiff and cold  
 When I forget you, hearts of gold ;  
 The land where I shall mind you not  
 Is the land where all's forgot.  
 And if my foot returns no more  
 To Teme nor Corve nor Severn shore,  
 Luck, my lads, be with you still  
 By falling stream and standing hill,  
 By chiming tower and whispering tree,  
 Men that made a man of me.  
 About your work in town and farm  
 Still you'll keep my head from harm,  
 Still you'll help me, hands that gave  
 A grasp to friend me to the grave.

## XXXIX

'Tis time, I think, by Wenlock town  
 The golden broom should blow ;  
 The hawthorn sprinkled up and down  
 Should charge the land with snow.

Spring will not wait the loiterer's time  
 Who keeps so long away ;  
 So others wear the broom and climb  
 The hedgerows heaped with may.

O tarnish late on Wenlock Edge,  
 Gold that I never see ;  
 Lie long, high snowdrifts in the hedge  
 That will not shower on me.

## XL

INTO my heart an air that kills  
 From yon far country blows :  
 What are those blue remembered hills,  
 What spires, what farms are those ?

That is the land of lost content,  
 I see it shining plain,  
 The happy highways where I went  
 And cannot come again.

## XLVII

## THE CARPENTER'S SON

"HERE the hangman stops his cart :  
 Now the best of friends must part.  
 Fare you well, for ill fare I :  
 Live, lads, and I will die.

"Oh, at home had I but stayed  
 'Prenticed to my father's trade,  
 Had I stuck to plane and adze,  
 I had not been lost, my lads.

"Then I might have built perhaps  
 Gallows-trees for other chaps,  
 Never dangled on my own,  
 Had I but left ill alone.

"Now, you see, they hang me high,  
 And the people passing by  
 Stop to shake their fists and curse ;  
 So 'tis come from ill to worse.

"Here hang I, and right and left  
 Two poor fellows hang for theft :  
 All the same's the luck we prove,  
 Though the midmost hangs for love.

"Comrades all, that stand and gaze,  
 Walk henceforth in other ways ;  
 See my neck and save your own :  
 Comrades all, leave ill alone.

"Make some day a decent end,  
 Shrewder fellows than your friend.  
 Fare you well, for ill fare I :  
 Live, lads, and I will die."

## XLIX

THINK no more, lad ; laugh, be jolly :  
 Why should men make haste to die ?  
 Empty heads and tongues a-talking  
 Make the rough road easy walking,  
 And the feather pate of folly  
 Bears the falling sky.

Oh, 'tis jesting, dancing, drinking  
 Spins the heavy world around.  
 If young hearts were not so clever,  
 Oh, they would be young for ever:  
 Think no more; 'tis only thinking  
 Lays lads underground.

## L

*Clunton and Clunbury,  
 Clungunford and Clun,  
 Are the quietest places  
 Under the sun.*

IN valleys of springs of rivers,  
 By Ony and Teme and Clun,  
 The country for easy livers,  
 The quietest under the sun,

We still had sorrows to lighten,  
 One could not be always glad,  
 And lads knew trouble at Knighton  
 When I was a Knighton lad.

By bridges that Thames runs under,  
 In London, the town built ill,  
 'Tis sure small matter for wonder  
 If sorrow is with one still.

And if as a lad grows older  
 The troubles he bears are more,  
 He carries his griefs on a shoulder  
 That handselled them long before.

Where shall one halt to deliver  
 This luggage I'd lief set down?  
 Not Thames, not Teme is the river,  
 Nor London nor Knighton the town.

'Tis a long way further than Knighton,  
 A quieter place than Clun,  
 Where doomsday may thunder and lighten  
 And little 'twill matter to one.

## LII

FAR in a western brookland  
 That bred me long ago  
 The poplars stand and tremble  
 By pools I used to know.

There, in the windless night-time,  
 The wanderer, marvelling why,  
 Halts on the bridge to hearken  
 How soft the poplars sigh.

He hears: no more remembered  
 In fields where I was known,  
 Here I lie down in London  
 And turn to rest alone.

There, by the starlit fences,  
 The wanderer halts and hears  
 My soul that lingers sighing  
 About the glimmering weirs.

## LXIII

I HOED and trenched and weeded,  
 And took the flowers to fair:  
 I brought them home unheeded;  
 The hue was not the wear.

So up and down I sow them  
 For lads like me to find,  
 When I shall lie below them,  
 A dead man out of mind.

Some seed the birds devour,  
 And some the season mars,  
 But here and there will flower  
 The solitary stars,

And fields will yearly bear them  
 As light-leaved spring comes on,  
 And luckless lads will wear them  
 When I am dead and gone.

## LIV

WITH rue my heart is laden  
 For golden friends I had,  
 For many a rose-lipt maiden  
 And many a lightfoot lad.

By brooks too broad for leaping  
 The lightfoot boys are laid;  
 The rose-lipt girls are sleeping  
 In fields where roses fade.

## LV

WESTWARD on the high-hilled plains  
 Where for me the world began,  
 Still, I think, in newer veins  
 Frets the changeless blood of man.

Now that other lads than I  
 Strip to bathe on Severn shore,  
 They, no help, for all they try,  
 Tread the mill I trod before.

There, when hueless is the west  
 And the darkness hushes wide,  
 Where the lad lies down to rest  
 Stands the troubled dream beside.

There, on thoughts that once were mine,  
 Day looks down the eastern steep,  
 And the youth at morning shine  
 Makes the vow he will not keep.





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Eternal hatred I have sworn against, L 440  
Eternal Spirit of the chainless Mind, B 178  
Ethereal minstrel! pilgrim of the sky, W 69  
Even as a child, of sorrow that we give,  
DGR 816  
Even in a palace, life may be led well! Ar 782  
Ever let the Fancy roam, K 369  
Fair Isabel, poor simple Isabel! K 370  
Fair is our lot — O goodly is our heritage!  
Ki 976  
Fair is the night and fair the day, M 884  
Fair ship, that from the Italian shore, T 493  
Fair Star of evening, Splendor of the west,  
W 38  
Fame, like a wayward girl, will still be coy,  
K 403  
Fare thee well! and if for ever, B 160  
"Farewell, Romance!" the Cave-men said,  
Ki 977  
Far-fetched and dear bought, as the proverb  
rehearses, Sw 933  
Far in a western brookland, Ho 997  
Faster, faster, Ar 729  
Fast this life of mine was dying, EBB 567  
Father! I now may lean upon your breast, L  
415  
Father! the little girl we see, L 410  
Fear death? — to feel the fog in my throat, RB  
676  
Fiend, I defy thee! with a calm, fixed mind,  
Sh 279  
Fire is in the flint: true, once a spark escapes,  
RB 601  
First pledge our Queen this solemn night, T  
511  
First time he kissed me, he but only kissed,  
EBB 566  
Five years have passed; five summers with  
the length, W 14  
Flow down, cold rivulet, to the sea, T 485  
Flower — I never fancied, jewel — I profess  
you! RB 683  
Flower in the crannied wall, T 535  
Foiled by our fellow-men, depress'd, outworn,  
Ar 783  
For many, many days together, M 853  
For Orford and for Waldegrave, B 245  
Four Seasons fill the measure of the year, K  
368  
Friend of the wise! and Teacher of the Good!  
C 111  
Friends! hear the words my wandering  
thoughts would say, L 439  
From child to youth; from youth to arduous  
man, DGR 822  
From eve to morn, from morn to parting  
night, L 422

- From heavy dreams fair Helen rose, Sc 110  
 From low to high doth dissolution climb, W 68  
 From Stirling Castle we had seen, W 47  
 From the ends of the earth, from the ends of the earth, Sh 283  
 From the forests and highlands, Sh 323  
 From unremembered ages we, Sh 285  
 Frost-locked all the winter, CR 847  
 Frowned the Laird on the Lord: "So, red-handed I catch thee?" RB 693  
  
 Get thee behind me. Even as, heavy-curved, DGR 826  
 Give her but a least excuse to love me! RB 588  
 Give honor unto Luke Evangelist, DGR 823  
 Give me the eyes that look on mine, L 425  
 Glion? — Ah, twenty years, it cuts, Ar 790  
 Glory and loveliness have passed away, K 359  
 Glory of warrior, glory of orator, glory of song, T 534  
 God of our fathers, known of old, Ki 983  
 God said, Let there be light! and there was light, DGR 801  
 Gods of Hellas, gods of Hellas, EBB 555  
 Goethe in Weimar sleeps, and Greece, Ar 732  
 Go, for they call you, shepherd, from the hill, Ar 762  
 Go from me. Yet I feel that I shall stand, EBB 560  
 Gold on her head and gold on her feet, M 862  
 Go not, happy day, T 514  
 Good luck to your fishing! D 956  
 Good, to forgive, RB 687  
 Great men have been among us; hands that penned, W 41  
 Great Michelangelo, with age grown bleak, DGR 827  
 Great spirits now on earth are sojourning, K 352  
 Green fields of England! whereso'er, Cl 720  
 Grow old along with me! RB 668  
 Gulls in an æry morrice, He 966  
  
 Had I but plenty of money, money enough and to spare, RB 627  
 Had she come all the way for this? M 864  
 Had this effulgence disappeared, W 65  
 Hail to the Chief who in triumph advances! Sc 128  
 Hail to thee, blithe spirit! Sh 321  
 Half a league, half a league, T 512  
 Hamelin Town's in Brunswick, RB 605  
 Hapless doom of woman happy in betrothing! T 538  
 Hark! ah, the nightingale, Ar 761  
 Harp of the North, farewell! The hills grow dark, Sc 129  
 Hast thou a charm to stay the morning star, C 109  
 Hast thou seen, with flash incessant, W 65  
 Have you not noted in some family, DGR 815  
  
 Heap cassia, sandal-buds, and stripes, RB 573  
 Harken, thou craggy ocean pyramid! K 368  
 Hear, sweet spirit, hear the spell, C 85  
 Heavenborn Helen, Sparta's queen, DGR 811  
 He clasps the crag with crooked hands, T 507  
 He had played for his lordship's levee, D 950  
 He held no dream worth waking: so he said, Sw 942  
 He is gone on the mountain, Sc 129  
 He lived in that past Georgian day, D 947  
 Her arms across her breast she laid, T 490  
 Here are we for the last time face to face, M 884  
 Here begins the sea that ends not till the world's end. Where we stand, Sw 938  
 Here in this leafy place, D 948  
 Here is a story, shall stir you! Stand up, Greeks dead and gone, RB 689  
 Here, oh here, Sh 305  
 Here on our native soil, we breathe once more, W 39  
 Here pause; the poet claims at least this praise, W 59  
 Here's a health to King Charles, Sc 136  
 Here's a present for Rose, D 949  
 Here's my case. Of old I used to love him, RB 682  
 "Here the hangman stops his cart, Ho 996  
 Here the self-torturing sophist, wild Rousseau, B 172  
 Here, where precipitate spring, with one light bound, L 413  
 Here, where the world is quiet, Sw 907  
 Her eyes are homes of silent prayer, T 497  
 He prayeth best who loveth best, C 93  
 He rose at dawn and, fired with hope, T 531  
 Hie away, hie away, Sc 131  
 High grace, the dower of queens; and therewithal, DGR 817  
 High is our calling, Friend! Creative Art, W 64  
 His Soul fared forth (as from the deep home grove, DGR 830  
 Ho! is there any will ride with me, M 867  
 Home they brought her warrior dead, T 491  
 Hope evermore and believe, O man, for e'en as thy thought, Cl 717  
 How changed is here each spot man makes or fills! Ar 778  
 How clear, how keen, how marvellously bright, W 64  
 How do I love thee? Let me count the ways, EBB 566  
 How fever'd is the man, who cannot look, K 403  
 How long in his damp trance young Juan lay, B 217  
 How many bards gild the lapses of time, K 352  
 How many voices gaily sing, L 426  
 How often sit I, poring o'er, Cl 707  
 "How seldom, friend! a good great man inherits, C 110



- How shall a Writer change his ways? D 955  
 How steadfastly she worked at it, D 950
- I am a painter who cannot paint, RB 587  
 "I am not as these are," the poet saith, DGR 824
- I am not One who much or oft delight, W 58  
 I am poor brother Lippo, by your leave! RB 652
- I am that which began, Sw 912  
 I am thine harp between thine hands, O mother! Sw 918
- Ianthe! you are called to cross the sea! L 413  
 I arise from dreams of thee, Sh 274  
 I ask not that my bed of death, Ar 787  
 I bring fresh showers for the thirsting flowers, Sh 320
- I built my soul a lordly pleasure-house, T 454  
 I cannot tell you how it was, CR 846  
 I Catherine am a Douglas born, DGR 831  
 I come from haunts of coot and hern, T 512  
 I come to visit thee again, L 425  
 I could have painted pictures like that youth's, RB 615
- I did not chide him, though I knew, CR 843  
 I dreamed that, as I wandered by the way, Sh 324
- I drew it from its china tomb; —, D 944  
 I envy not in any moods, T 496  
 If childhood were not in the world, Sw 931  
 I fear thy kisses, gentle maiden, Sh 322  
 If ever I should condescend to prose, B 215  
 If from the public way you turn your steps, W 24
- If I leave all for thee, wilt thou exchange, EBB 565
- If love were what the rose is, Sw 905  
 If Nature, for a favorite child, W 21  
 If one could have that little head of hers, RB 676
- If one should bring me this report, T 494  
 If these brief lays, of Sorrow born, T 497  
 If this great world of joy and pain, W 72  
 If thou indeed derive thy light from Heaven, W 71
- If thou must love me, let it be for nought, EBB 562
- If to grow old in Heaven is to grow young, DGR 821
- If you can keep your head when all about you, Ki 989
- I gave my heart to a woman —, He 963  
 I grieved for Buonaparté, with a vain, W 38  
 I had a dream which was not all a dream, B 184
- I had a vision when the night was late, T 486  
 I have beheld thee in the morning hour, L 419  
 I have eaten your bread and salt, Ki 972  
 I have led her home, my love, my only friend, T 514
- I have lived long enough, having seen one thing, that love hath an end, Sw 903  
 I have seen higher, holier things than these, Cl 707
- I heard a thousand blended notes, W 12  
 I heard men saying, Leave hope and praying M 888
- I hear the noise about thy keel, T 494  
 I held her hand, the pledge of bliss, L 413  
 I hid my heart in a nest of roses, Sw 921  
 I hoed and trenched and weeded, Ho 997  
 I intended an ode, D 949  
 I know a little garden close, M 868  
 I know a Mount, the gracious Sun perceives, RB 609
- I know not whether I am proud, L 425  
 I leave thee, beauteous Italy! no more, L 422  
 I lift my heavy heart up solemnly, EBB 560  
 I lived with visions for my company, EBB 561  
 I looked and saw your eyes, DGR 828  
 I loved him not; and yet now he is gone, L 415  
 "I love you: sweet, how can you ever learn, DGR 815
- I marked all kindred Powers the heart finds fair, DGR 812
- I met a traveller from an antique land, Sh 268
- In a coign of the cliff between lowland and highland, Sw 920
- In a drear-nighted December, K 368  
 In after days when grasses high, D 955  
 Indeed this very love which is my boast, EBB 561
- I never gave a lock of hair away, EBB 563  
 In front the awful Alpine track, Ar 745  
 In her ear he whispers gaily, T 489  
 Inland, within a hollow vale I stood, W 40  
 In love, if love be ours, T 519  
 In our Museum galleries, DGR 806  
 In summertime on Bredon, Ho 994  
 In the bare midst of Anglesey they show, Ar 783
- In the deserted, moon-blanch'd street, Ar 741  
 In the Neolithic Age savage warfare did I wage, Ki 976
- In the School of Coquettes, D 948  
 In the sweet shire of Cardigan, W 11  
 In the white-flowered hawthorn brake, M 884
- In this lone, open glade I lie, Ar 743  
 In those sad words I took farewell, T 499  
 In valleys of springs of rivers, Ho 997  
 In whomsoever, since Poesy began, DGR 830  
 In Xanadu did Kubla Khan, C 84  
 In youth from rock to rock I went, W 42  
 I past beside the reverend walls, T 501  
 Iphigenia, when she heard her doom, L 428  
 I read, before my eyelids dropped their shade, T 461
- I said: "Nay, pluck not, let the first fruit be," DGR 825
- I said — Then dearest, since 'tis so, RB 642  
 I sate beside a sage's bed, Sh 286  
 I sat with Love upon a woodside well, DGR 819  
 I saw again the spirits on a day, Cl 710  
 I send my heart up to thee, all my heart, RB 602
- I shiver, spirit fierce and bold, W 44

- I sing of Pope, D 952  
 I sing the fates of Gebir. He had dwelt, L 407  
 I sing to him that rests below, T 495  
 Is it indeed so? If I lay here dead, EBB 564  
 Is it not better at an early hour, L 425  
 Is it not true that every day, M 855  
 "Is my team ploughing, Ho 995  
 I sometimes hold it half a sin, T 493  
 I sprang to the stirrup, and Joris, and he, RB 610  
 Is thy face like thy mother's, my fair child! B 161  
 I stood in Venice on the Bridge of Sighs, B 207  
 I stood on Brocken's sovran height, and saw, C 105  
 I stood within the Coliseum's wall, B 204  
 I strove with none: for none was worth my strife, L 438  
 Italia, mother of the souls of men, Sw 938  
 Italia! oh Italia! thou who hast, B 209  
 Italia! too, Italia! looking on thee, B 176  
 It does not hurt. She looked along the knife, Sw 920  
 I tell you, hopeless grief is passionless, EBB 553  
 It fortifies my soul to know, Cl 722  
 I think all who have loved me in their hearts, EBB 566  
 I thought of Thee, my partner and my guide, W 67  
 I thought once how Theocritus had sung, EBB 559  
 It is a beauteous evening, calm and free, W 39  
 It is an ancient Mariner, C 85  
 It is not sweet content, be sure, Cl 713  
 It is not to be thought of that the flood, W 41  
 It is the first mild day of March, W 12  
 It is the miller's daughter, T 450  
 It keeps eternal whisperings around, K 359  
 It little profits that an idle king, T 478  
 It once might have been, once only, RB 675  
 I travelled among unknown men, W 19  
 — It seems a day, W 18  
 It was a bowl of roses, He 967  
 It was a dream (ah! what is not a dream?), L 438  
 It was a lovely sight to see, C 97  
 It was an April morning: fresh and clear, W 30  
 It was roses, roses all the way, RB 641  
 I've a friend, over the sea, RB 613  
 I've paid for your sickest fancies; I've humoured your crackestest whim, Ki 979  
 I've taken my fun where I've found it, Ki 983  
 I waited for the train at Coventry, T 483  
 I wandered lonely as a cloud, W 52  
 I was thy neighbor once, thou rugged Pile, W 54  
 I weep for Adonais — he is dead! Sh 336  
 I went into a public-house to get a pint o' beer, Ki 972  
 I will not shut me from my kind, T 503  
 I wish I were a little bird, CR 845  
 I wish my mother could see me now, with a fence-post under my arm, Ki 984  
 I wonder do you feel today, RB 636  
 I wonder if the sap is stirring yet, CR 845  
 I wonder not that youth remains, L 438  
 J'ai vu faner bien des choses, Sw 902  
 Juan knew several languages — as well, B 227  
 June was not over, RB 637  
 Just for a handful of silver he left us, RB 610  
 Keen, fitful gusts are whispering here and there, K 352  
 Kentish Sir Byng stood for his King, RB 599  
 King Charles, and who'll do him right now? RB 599  
 Kissing her hair I sat against her feet, Sw 907  
 Know'st thou not at the fall of the leaf, DGR 799  
 Know ye the land where the cypress and myrtle, B 143  
 Lady Alice, lady Louise, M 863  
 Lady Clara Vere de Vere, T 465  
 Late, late, so late! and dark the night and chill, T 522  
 Lately our songsters loiter'd in green lanes, L 440  
 Le navire, Sw 902  
 Let no man ask thee of anything, DGR 829  
 Let's contend no more, Love, RB 625  
 Let us begin and carry up this corpse, RB 644  
 Let your hands meet, Sw 890  
 Life may change, but it may fly not, Sh 343  
 Life of Life! the lips enkindle, Sh 297  
 Light flows our war of mocking words, and yet, Ar 742  
 Light of our fathers' eyes, and, in our own, Sw 923  
 Like labor-laden moonclouds faint to flee, DGR 818  
 Like the ghost of a dear friend dead, Sh 325  
 Little Ellie sits alone, EBB 554  
 Live all thy sweet life through, CR 845  
 Live thy life, T 549  
 Lo, from our loitering ship a new land at last to be seen, M 802  
 Lo, here is God, and there is God! Cl 708  
 Lone Flower, hemmed in with snows and white as they, W 66  
 Long fed on boundless hopes, O race of man, Ar 783  
 Look in my face; my name is Might-have-been, DGR 827  
 Lord of days and nights, that hear thy word of wintry warning, Sw 940  
 Lord of the Celtic dells, L 421  
 Love is and was my lord and king, T 506  
 Love is enough: ho ye who seek saving, M 887

Loveliest of trees, the cherry now, Ho 993  
 Love me, sweet, with all thou art, EBB 559  
 Love's priestess, mad with pain and joy of  
 song, Sw 926

Love thou thy land, with love far-brought,  
 T 471

Love to his singer held a glistening leaf,  
 DGR 821

Love you seek for, presupposes, EBB 568

Lo, when we wade the tangled wood, M 893

Lo! where the four mimosas blend their  
 shade, L 414

Low was our pretty Cot: our tallest rose, C 81

Maid of Athens, ere we part, B 141

"Man is blind because of sin, Ar 785

Many a green isle needs must be, Sh 268

Many a hearth upon our dark globe sighs  
 after many a vanish'd face, T 546

Many love music but for music's sake, L 438

March, march, Ettrick and Teviotdale, Sc

134

Master of the murmuring courts, DGR 809

Me that 'ave been what I've been, Ki 987

Mild is the parting year, and sweet, L 413

Milton! thou should'st be living at this hour,  
 W 40

Minnie and Winnie, T 545

Moderate tasks and moderate leisure, Ar 734

Monarch of Gods and Demons and all Spirits,  
 Sh 275

Mont Blanc is the monarch of mountains, B  
 187

Most sweet it is with unuplifted eyes, W 72

Mother, I cannot mind my wheel, L 423

Much have I travelled in the realms of gold,  
 K 352

Music, when soft voices die, Sh 335

My boat is on the shore, B 206

My briar that smelledst sweet, L 414

My coursers are fed with the lightning, Sh  
 296

My Father was a scholar and knew Greek,  
 RB 693

My first thought was, he lied in every word,  
 RB 649

My future will not copy fair my past, EBB  
 566

My good blade carves the casques of men, T  
 485

My hair is gray, but not with years, B 178

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness  
 pains, K 388

My heart is like a singing bird, CR 846

My heart leaps up when I behold, W 34

My hopes retire, my wishes as before, L 425

My letters! all dead paper, mute and white!  
 EBB 564

My love has talk'd with rocks and trees, T  
 502

—My love, this is the bitterest, that thou,  
 RB 634

My own Belovèd, who hast lifted me, EBB  
 561

My poet, thou canst touch on all the notes,  
 EBB 562

My sister! my sweet sister! if a name, B 182

My soul is an enchanted boat, Sh 297

My spirit is too weak — mortality, K 359

Nay but you, who do not love her, RB 612

Nay, Traveller! rest. This lonely Yew-tree  
 stands, W 5

Never the time and the place, RB 690

Nobly, nobly, Cape Saint Vincent to the  
 Northwest died away, RB 613

No doubt but ye are the People — your  
 throne is above the King's, Ki 986

No, great Dome of Agrippa, thou art not  
 Christian! canst not, Cl 711

No more — no more — Oh! never more on  
 me, B 216

No, my own love of other years! L 424

Non ego hoc ferrem calida juvenata, B 215

No, no, go not to Lethe, neither twist, K 389

Nor happiness, nor majesty, nor fame, Sh  
 335

Not as with sundering of the earth, Sw 899

Not by one measure may'st thou mete our  
 love, DGR 817

Not from the ranks of those we call, D 953

Nothing so difficult as a beginning, B 226

No! those days are gone away, K 367

Not if men's tongues and angels' all in one,  
 Sw 931

Not I myself know all my love for thee, DGR  
 818

Not seldom, clad in radiant vest, W 65

Not that the earth is changing, O my God!  
 DGR 801

Now fades the last long streak of snow, T 504

Now Morning from her orient chamber came,  
 K 351

Now, sometimes in my sorrow shut, T 495

Nuns fret not at their convents' narrow  
 room, W 57

O bitter sea, tumultuous sea, M 867

O blackbird! sing me something well, T 469

O blithe New-comer! I have heard, W 51

O Brignall banks are wild and fair, Sc 130

O death that maketh life so sweet, M 868

O diviner air, T 545

Of Adam's first wife, Lilith, it is told, DGR  
 824

Of Heaven or Hell I have no power to sing, M  
 871

Of late, in one of those most weary hours, C  
 114

Of old sat Freedom on the heights, T 470

O follow, follow, Sh 290

O Friend! I know not which way I must turn,  
 W 40

Of such is the kingdom of heaven, Sw 931

Oft I had heard of Lucy Gray, W 23

O, gather me the rose, the rose, He 962

O Goddess! hear these tuneless numbers  
 wrung, K 386

- O good gigantic smile o' the brown old earth,  
RB 665
- O happy seafarers are ye, M 869
- O heart of hearts, the chalice of love's fire,  
Sw 919
- Oh, East is East, and West is West, and never  
the twain shall meet, Ki 970
- Oh Galuppi, Baldassare, this is very sad to  
find! RB 628
- Oh! pleasant exercise of hope and joy! W 55
- Oh roses for the flush of youth, CR 844
- Oh! snatch'd away in beauty's bloom, B 158
- Oh, talk not to me of a name great in story,  
B 246
- Oh! there are spirits of the air, Sh 250
- Oh, to be in England, RB 612
- Oh why is heaven built so far, CR 840
- Oh, wilt thou have my hand, Dear, to lie  
along in thine? EBB 567
- O June, O June, that we desired so, M 883
- "Old things need not be therefore true," Cl  
719
- O let me love my love unto myself alone,  
Cl 723
- O, let the solid ground, T 513
- O living will that shalt endure, T 506
- O lord of all compassionate control, DGR 814
- O lovers' eyes are sharp to see, Sc 127
- O lyric Love, half angel and half bird, RB  
678
- O mighty-mouth'd inventor of harmonies, T  
531
- O muse that swayest the sad northern song,  
M 893
- On a battle-trumpet's blast, Sh 286
- On a poet's lips I slept, Sh 286
- Once did She hold the glorious east in fee,  
W 39
- Once in a golden hour, T 533
- Once in a lonely hamlet I sojourned, W 32
- Once more the changed year's turning wheel  
returns, DGR 825
- Once more upon the waters! yet once more,  
B 161
- One day, it thundered and lightened, RB 690
- One flame-winged brought a white-winged  
harp-player, DGR 814
- On either side the river lie, T 448
- One lesson, Nature, let me learn of thee, Cl  
727
- One morn before me were three figures seen,  
K 385
- One word is too often profaned, Sh 345
- One writes that "other friends remain," T  
493
- One year ago my path was green, L 424
- On moonlit heath and lonesome bank, Ho 993
- On the brink of the night and the morning,  
Sh 206
- On the idle hill of summer, Ho 995
- On the sea and at the Hogue, sixteen hun-  
dred ninety-two, RB 678
- On the smooth brow and clustering hair, L  
425
- On the wide level of a mountain's head, C 82
- On this sweet bank your head thrice sweet  
and dear, DGR 815
- O only Source of all our light and life, Cl 718
- O pensive, tender maid, downcast and shy,  
M 882
- Or ever the knightly years were gone, He 964
- O Rome! my country! city of the soul, B 209
- Or shall I say, vain word, false thought, Cl  
713
- O set us down together in some place, M 878
- O ship, ship, ship, Cl 721
- O sleep, it is a gentle thing, C 89
- O soft embalmer of the still midnight, K 403
- O solitude! if I must with thee dwell, K 351
- O Sorrow, cruel fellowship, T 492
- O Sorrow, K 365
- O sovereign power of love! O grief! O balm!  
K 364
- O stream descending to the sea, Cl 722
- O swallow, swallow, flying, flying south, T  
490
- O that I now, I too were, Sw 898
- O that 'twere possible, T 517
- Others abide our question. Thou art free, Ar  
727
- O thou that after toil and storm, T 497
- O thou that sendest out the man, T 537
- O thou who at Love's hour ecstatically,  
DGR 813
- O thou! whose fancies from afar are brought  
W 41
- O thou whose image in the shrine, Cl 718
- O thou, whose mighty palace roof doth hang,  
K 361
- O thou, wild Fancy, check thy wing! No  
more, C 78
- Our gaieties, our luxuries, Cl 714
- Our hid'd vessels in their pitchy round, L  
409
- Our spoil is won, Sh 307
- Out of my way! Off! or my sword may strike  
thee, L 435
- Out of the deep, my child, out of the deep,  
T 511
- Out of the night that covers me, He 962
- Overhead the tree-tops meet, RB 507
- Over the great windy waters, and over the  
clear-crested summits, Cl 710
- Over the sea our galleys went, RB 573
- O, well for him whose will is strong! T 518
- O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms, K 402
- O wild West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's  
being, Sh 273
- O woman! in our hours of ease, Sc 156
- O world! O life! O time! Sh 335
- "O ye, all ye that walk in Willowwood, DGR  
819
- O yet we trust that somehow good, T 498
- O young Mariner, T 547
- Pansies, lilies, kingcups, daisies, W 34
- Past ruin'd Ilion Helen lives, L 413
- Peace; come away; the song of woe. T 498



Peace in her chamber, wheresoe'er, DGR 810  
 Pibroch of Donuil Dhu, Sc 132  
 Pleasures newly found are sweet, W 35  
 Pleasure! why thus desert the heart, L 413  
 Poet of Nature, thou hast wept to know, Sh 610 n.  
 Praised be the Art whose subtle power could stay, W 60  
 Pray but one prayer for me 'twixt thy closed lips, M 855  
 Proud Maisie is in the wood, Sc 133  
 Proud word you never spoke, but you will speak, L 425  
 Push hard across the sand, Sw 896  
 Put forth thy leaf, thou lofty plane, Cl 724

Queen Guinevere had fled the court, and sat, T 519  
 Quoth a young Sadducee, RB 665

Rain, rain, and sun! a rainbow in the sky! T 534

Raised are the dripping oars, Ar 739  
 Rarely, rarely, comest thou, Sh 325  
 Remain, ah not in youth alone, L 424  
 Remember me when I am gone away, CR 844  
 "Return," we dare not as we fain, Sw 941  
 Revered, beloved — O you that hold, T 507  
 Rhaicos was born amid the hills wherefrom, L 429

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky, T 503  
 Rivulet crossing my ground, T 515  
 Roll on, thou deep and dark blue ocean — roll, B 212

Roman Virgil, thou that singest Ilion's lofty temples robed in fire, T 545

Rome disappoints me still; but I shrink and adapt myself to it, Cl 711

Rome is fallen, I hear, the gallant Medici taken, Cl 712

Room after room, RB 638

Rose kissed me today, D 948

Rough wind, that moanest loud, Sh 347

Round the cape of a sudden came the sea, RB 612

Round us the wild creatures, RB 601

Rousseau — Voltaire — our Gibbon — and De Staël —, B 186

Row us out from Desenzano, to your Sirmione row! T 546

Said Abner, "At last thou art come! Ere I tell, ere thou speak, RB 618

St. Agnes' Eve — Ah, bitter chill it was! K 378

Saint Peter sat by the celestial gate, B 231

Saith man to man, We've heard and known, M 880

Savage, I was sitting in my house, late, lone: RB 681

Say, lad, have you things to do? Ho 994

Say not the struggle nought availeth, Cl 715

Say over again and yet once over again, EBB 563

Say what blinds us, that we claim the glory, Ar 733

Scorn not the Sonnet; Critic, you have frowned, W 69

Sea beyond sea, sand after sweep of sand, Sw 934

Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness, K 390

Seaward goes the sun, and homeward by the down, Sw 935

See, as the prettiest grave will do in time, RB 612

See what a lovely shell, T 516

Self-exiled Harold wanders forth again, B 163

Send but a song oversea for us, Sw 916

Set where the upper streams of Simois flow, Ar 786

Shall I sonnet-sing you about myself? RB 681

Shame upon you, Robin, T 538

She dwelt among the untrodden ways, W 10

She fell asleep on Christmas Eve, DGR 797

She loves him; for her infinite soul is love, DGR 820

She's an enchanting little Israelite, He 961

She should never have looked at me, RB 600

She stands as pale as Parian statues stand, CR 845

She walks in beauty, like the night, B 158

She was a Phantom of delight, W 51

Sing me a hero! Quench my thirst, RB 680

Sleep, little Baby, sleep, CR 845

So all day long the noise of battle roll'd, T 472

"So careful of the type?" but no, T 408

So fair, so sweet, withal so sensitive, W 73

So ends the winning of the Golden Fleece, M 871

So far as our story approaches the end, RB 641

So go forth to the world, to the good report and the evil! Cl 712

So, I grew wise in Love and Hate, RB 587

So in the sinful streets, abstracted and alone, Cl 717

So, I shall see her in three days, RB 630

Soldier, rest! thy warfare o'er, Sc 128

Some are laughing, some are weeping, CR 844

Some future day when what is now is not, Cl 721

Some ladies love the jewels in Love's zone, DGR 813

Something is dead, He 965

Sometimes thou seem'st not as thyself alone, DGR 817

So now my summer task is ended, Mary, Sh 266

Soon, O Ianthe! life is o'er, L 425

So sang he: and as meeting rose and rose, DGR 810

"So say the foolish!" Say the foolish so, Love? RB 692



- So then, I feel not deeply! if I did, L 438  
 So, the year's done with! RB 612  
 Souls of Poets dead and gone, K 369  
 Sound, sound the clarion, fill the life, Sc  
 133  
 So we'll go no more a-roving, B 245  
 Spray of song that springs in April, light of  
 love that laughs through May, Sw 937  
 Spring am I, too soft of heart, M 886  
 Stand close around, ye Stygian set, L 419  
 Standing aloof in giant ignorance, K 360  
 Stand still, true poet that you are, RB 640  
 Stay near me — do not take thy flight! W 32  
 Stern Daughter of the Voice of God, W 53  
 Still sometimes in my secret heart of hearts,  
 CR 848  
 Strahan, Tonson, Lintot of the times, B 245  
 Strange fits of passion have I known, W 18  
 Strew on her roses, roses, Ar 747  
 Strong Son of God, immortal Love, T 492  
 Such a starved bank of moss, RB 687  
 Such, British Public, ye who like me not, RB  
 677  
 "Summer is coming, summer is coming, T 549  
 Sunset and evening star, T 549  
 Surprised by joy — impatient as the wind,  
 W 64  
 Sweet after showers, ambrosial air, T 501  
 Sweet and low, sweet and low, T 401  
 Sweet dimness of her loosened hair's down-  
 fall, DGR 816  
 Sweet Highland Girl, a very shower, W 45  
 Sweet is true love, tho' given in vain, T 519  
 Sweet Spirit! Sister of that orphan one, Sh 326  
 Sweet stream-fed glen, why say "farewell"  
 to thee, DGR 825  
 Sweet twining hedge flowers wind-stirred in  
 no wise, DGR 814  
 Swiftly walk o'er the western wave, Sh 334  
 Take these flowers, which purple waving, Sc  
 122  
 Take up the White Man's burden —, Ki 984  
 Tanagra! think not I forget, L 419  
 Tax not the royal Saint with vain expense,  
 W 68  
 Tears, idle tears, I know not what they  
 mean, T 490  
 Tears of the widower, when he sees, T 494  
 Tell me, thou star, whose wings of light, Sh  
 325  
 That second time they hunted me, RB 613  
 That's my last Duchess painted on the wall,  
 RB 601  
 That son of Italy who tried to blow, Ar 782  
 That which we dare invoke to bless, T 505  
 That wooden cross beside the road, D 956  
 The Assyrian came down like a wolf on the  
 fold, B 158  
 The awful shadow of some unseen Power, Sh  
 262  
 The Baron of Smaylho'me rose with day, Sc  
 122  
 The bee with his comb, RB 597  
 The blessed damozel leaned out, DGR 707  
 The burden of fair women. Vain delight,  
 Sw 905  
 The castled crag of Drachenfels, B 168  
 The chrysolites and rubies Bacchus brings,  
 L 437  
 The churl in spirit, up or down, T 504  
 The clearest eyes in all the world they read,  
 Sw 941  
 The Cock is crowing, W 34  
 The Danube to the Severn gave, T 495  
 The day returns, my natal day, L 426  
 The evening comes, the fields are still, Ar 785  
 The everlasting universe of things, Sh 264  
 The face of all the world is changed, I think,  
 EBB 561  
 The fancy I had to-day, RB 680  
 The first time that the sun rose on thine  
 oath, EBB 565  
 The flower that smiles to-day, Sh 335  
 The fountains mingle with the river, Sh 274  
 The Frost performs its secret ministry, C 102  
 The gallant Youth, who may have gained,  
 W 70  
 The Gods held talk together, group'd in knots,  
 Ar 766  
 The gray sea, and the long black land, RB  
 612  
 The greater masters of the commonplace,  
 He 958  
 The heavenly bay, ringed round with cliffs  
 and moors, Sw 933  
 The hour which might have been yet might  
 not be, DGR 820  
 The human spirits saw I on a day, Cl 709  
 The isles of Greece, the isles of Greece! B 222  
 The jessamine shows like a star, CR 844  
 The joy, the triumph, the delight, the mad-  
 ness, Sh 310  
 The ladies of St. James's, D 951  
 The lamp must be replenish'd, but even then,  
 B 186  
 The lily has a smooth stalk, CR 848  
 The lost days of my life until to-day, DGR 826  
 The moon is up, and yet it is not night, B 208  
 The morning mists still haunt the stony  
 street, He 958  
 The morn when first it thunders in March,  
 RB 620  
 The moth's kiss first, RB 603  
 The nightingale has a lyre of gold, He 963  
 The Niobe of nations, there she stands, B 200  
 The odor from the flower is gone, Sh 268  
 The out-spread world to span, Ar 734  
 The pale stars are gone! Sh 305  
 The path thro' which that lovely twain, Sh 291  
 The poet in a golden clime was born, T 445  
 The poetry of earth is never dead, K 353  
 "The poets pour us wine —," RB 684  
 The rain had fallen, the Poet arose, T 489  
 The rain set early in to-night, RB 574  
 There be none of Beauty's daughters, B 160  
 There came an image in life's retinue, DGR  
 819

- There is a flower I wish to wear, L 430  
 "There is a Thorn — it looks so old, W 8  
 There is a Yew-tree, pride of Lorton Vale,  
 W 44  
 There is delight in singing, tho' none hear,  
 L 426  
 "There is no God," the wicked saith, Cl 714  
 There is no "mighty purpose" in this book,  
 D 954  
 There is no one beside thee and no one above  
 thee, EBB 567  
 There is sweet music here that softer falls,  
 T 459  
 There lies a vale in Ida, lovelier, T 450  
 There rolls the deep where grew the tree, T  
 505  
 "There!" said a Stripling, pointing with meet  
 pride, W 72  
 There is a palace in Florence the world knows  
 well, RB 645  
 There's a tear in her eye, D 948  
 There's a woman like a dewdrop, she's so  
 purer than the purest, RB 609  
 There's not a joy the world can give like that  
 it takes away, B 159  
 There's not a nook within this solemn Pass,  
 W 71  
 There the voluptuous nightingales, Sh 291  
 There they are, my fifty men and women, RB  
 662  
 There was a Boy; ye knew him well, ye cliffs,  
 W 17  
 There was a lady lived in a hall, M 866  
 There was a roaring in the wind all night,  
 W 36  
 There was a sound of revelry by night, B 163  
 There was a time when meadow, grove, and  
 stream, W 48  
 There were four of us about that bed, M 861  
 The sea gives her shells to the shingle, Sw 910  
 The sea is at ebb, and the sound of her utmost  
 word, Sw 935  
 The sea is awake, and the sound of the song of  
 the joy of her waking is rolled, Sw 936  
 The sea is calm tonight, Ar 784  
 These are the symbols; on that cloth of red,  
 DGR 802  
 These days are long before I die, CR 846  
 The skies have sunk, and hid the upper snow,  
 Cl 722  
 The sky is changed! and such a change! oh  
 night, B 174  
 — The sky is overcast, W 7  
 The soul's Rialto hath its merchandise, EBB  
 563  
 The Spirit of the world, Ar 789  
 The splendor falls on castle walls, T 491  
 The spring, my dear, He 964  
 The stars are forth, the moon above the tops,  
 B 204  
 The sun is warm, the sky is clear, Sh 272  
 The sun, the moon, the stars, the seas, the  
 hills and the plains —, T 535  
 The sun upon the Weirclaw Hill, Sc 133
- The Sword, He 960  
 The sylvan slopes with corn-clad fields, W 66  
 The time draws near the birth of Christ, T  
 496, 503  
 The time you won your town the race, Ho 994  
 The tongue of England, that which myriads,  
 L 437  
 The unremitting voice of nightly streams, W  
 74  
 The violet in the green-wood bower, Sc 122  
 The voice and the Peak, T 537  
 The voice of the spirits of air and of earth,  
 Sh 330  
 The wan sun westers, faint and slow, He 962  
 The weltering London ways where children  
 weep, DGR 830  
 The wind flapped loose, the wind was still,  
 DGR 810  
 The wish, that of the living whole, T 498  
 The word of the sun to the sky, Sw 923  
 The world is a bundle of hay, B 245  
 The world is too much with us; late and  
 soon, W 58  
 The world's great age begins anew, Sh 345  
 The woods decay, the leaves decay and fall,  
 T 529  
 They dwell in the odor of camphor, D 951  
 The year's at the spring, RB 581  
 The Year's twelve daughters had in turn  
 gone by, L 433  
 They rose to where their sovran eagle sails,  
 T 538  
 They say that Hope is happiness, B 184  
 Thick rise the spear-shafts o'er the land, M  
 891  
 Thin are the night-skirts left behind, DGR  
 828  
 Think no more, lad; laugh, be jolly, Ho 996  
 Think thou and act; to-morrow thou shalt  
 die, DGR 823  
 This feast-day of the sun, his altar there,  
 DGR 822  
 This is a spray the Bird clung to, RB 637  
 This is her picture as she was, DGR 790  
 This is that blessed Mary, pre-elect, DGR 802  
 This is the place. Even here the dauntless  
 soul, DGR 830  
 "This river does not see the naked sky, K 362  
 This time of year a twelvemonth past, Ho 995  
 This truth came borne with bier and pall, T  
 500  
 This world is very odd we see, Cl 714  
 Those who have laid the harp aside, L 420  
 Thou art folded, thou art lying, Sh 312  
 Thou art speeding round the sun, Sh 313  
 Thou comest! all is said without a word, EBB  
 565  
 Thou earth, calm empire of a happy soul, Sh  
 313  
 Though God, as one that is an householder,  
 DGR 824  
 Though the day of my destiny's over, B 182  
 Thou goest, then, and leavest me behind, L  
 136

- Thou lovely and beloved, thou my love,  
DGR 817
- Thou shalt have one God only; who, Cl 713
- Thou still unravish'd bride of quietness, K  
387
- Three years she grew in sun and shower, W  
19
- Thrice three hundred thousand years, Sh 276
- Through Alpine meadows soft-suffused, Ar  
775
- Through the black, rushing smoke-bursts, Ar  
738
- Through the great sinful streets of Naples as  
I passed, Cl 715
- Through thick Arcadian woods a hunter  
went, M 872
- Thy voice is heard thro' rolling drums, T 491
- Thy voice is on the rolling air, T 506
- Tibur is beautiful too, and the orchard slopes,  
and the Arno, Cl 711
- 'Tis death! and peace indeed is here, Ar 782
- 'Tis done — but yesterday a King! B 156
- 'Tis held that sorrow makes us wise, T 504
- 'Tis said that some have died for love, W 31
- 'Tis the middle of the night by the castle  
clock, C 94
- 'Tis time, I think, by Wenlock town, Ho 996
- 'Tis time this heart should be unmoved, B  
246
- 'Tis well; 'tis something; we may stand, T 495
- Titan! to whose immortal eyes, B 185
- To be a sweetness more desired than Spring,  
DGR 820
- To-day Death seems to me an infant child,  
DGR 827
- To my ninth decade I have tottered on, L  
441
- To one who has been long in city pent, K 352
- To spend uncounted years of pain, Cl 724
- To the deep, to the deep, Sh 293
- To the Lords of Convention, 'twas Claver'se  
who spoke, Sc 134
- Touch him ne'er so lightly, into song he  
broke, RB 689
- Toussaint, the most unhappy man of men,  
W 39
- To wear out heart and nerves and brain, Cl  
724
- Tranquillity! thou better name, C 106
- Troubled long with warring notions, W 65
- True-love, an thou be true, Sc 133
- Turn, Fortune, turn thy wheel, and lower  
the proud, T 519
- 'Twas August, and the fierce sun overhead,  
Ar 782
- 'Twas evening, though not sunset, and the  
tide, L 427
- 'Twas twilight and the sunless day went  
down, B 216
- Twenty years hence my eyes may grow, L 425
- Twist ye, twine ye! even so, Sc 131
- 'Twixt the sunlight and the shade, M 855
- 'Twixt those twin worlds, — the world of  
Sleep, which gave, DGR 831
- Two separate divided silences, DGR 818
- Two souls diverse out of our human sight,  
Sw 930
- Two Voices are there; one is of the sea, W 59
- Under the arch of Life, where love and death,  
DGR 824
- Unfathomable sea! whose waves are years,  
Sh 335
- Unlike are we, unlike, O princely heart, EBB  
560
- Upon an eve I sat me down and wept, M 886
- Upon a Sabbath-day it fell, K 383
- Up! up! my Friend, and quit your books, W 13
- Up with me! up with me into the clouds!  
W 53
- Vanguard of liberty, ye men of Kent, W 48
- Vanity, saith the preacher, vanity! RB 616
- Various the roads of life; in one, L 425
- Verse, a breeze mid blossoms straying, C 113
- Verse-making was least of my virtues: I  
viewed with despair, RB 691
- Wailing, wailing, wailing, the wind over  
land and sea, T 543
- Wake! For the Sun, who scatter'd into flight,  
F 697
- Waken, lords and ladies gay, Sc 128
- Wake: the silver dusk returning, Ho 993
- Wanting is — what? RB 690
- Warmed by her hand and shadowed by her  
hair, DGR 814
- Warriors and chiefs! should the shaft or the  
sword, B 159
- Was I a Samurai renowned, He 961
- Wasted, weary, wherefore stay, Sc 131
- Was *that* the landmark? What — the  
foolish well, DGR 822
- Watch thou and fear; tomorrow thou shalt  
die, DGR 823
- Water, for anguish of the solstice: — nay,  
DGR 802
- We are in love's land today, Sw 907
- We are what suns and winds and waters  
make us, L 411
- Wearily, drearily, M 867
- Weary of myself, and sick of asking, Ar 740
- We cannot kindle when we will, Ar 741
- We come from the mind, Sh 307
- We had a female Passenger who came, W 40
- We have seen thee, O Love, thou art fair;  
thou art goodly, O Love, Sw 898
- Welcome, old friend! These many years, L  
437
- We leave the well-beloved place, T 503
- We left behind the painted buoy, T 531
- Well! if the bard was weather-wise, who  
made, C 107
- Well I remember how you smiled, L 441
- Well, they are gone, and here must I remain,  
C 82
- We mind not how the sun in the mid-sky, L  
419

- We're foot — slog — slog — slog — sloggin'  
over Africa, Ki 988
- Were you with me, or I with you, Cl 721
- We rode together, M 852
- We shall surely die, He 962
- Westward on the high-hilled plains, Ho 997
- We talked with open heart, and tongue, W 22
- We walked along, while bright and red, W 21
- We were apart; yet, day by day, Ar 777
- We were two daughters of one race, T 454
- What a pretty tale you told me, RB 687
- "What are the bugles blowin' for?" said  
Files-on-Parade, Ki 972
- What can I give thee back, O liberal, EBB 561
- What dawn-pulse at the heart of heaven, or  
last, DGR 815
- Whate'er you dream, with doubt possest,  
Cl 724
- Whatever I have said or sung, T 505
- What have I done for you, He 966
- What is gold worth, say, Sw 923
- What is he buzzing in my ears? RB 675
- "What is it then," — some Reader asks, —,  
D 955
- What is it to grow old? Ar 784
- What is more gentle than a wind in summer?  
K 353
- What of her glass without her! The blank  
gray, DGR 820
- What place so strange, — though unre-  
vealed snow, DGR 825
- What secret thing of splendor or of shade,  
Sw 942
- What sight so lured him thro' the fields he  
knew, T 548
- What voice did on my spirit fall? Cl 712
- What was he doing, the great god Pan, EBB  
568
- What we, when face to face we see, Cl 719
- What will it please you, my darling, here-  
after to be? Sw 932
- "What, you are stepping westward?" —  
"Yea," W 46
- Wheer 'asta bean saw long and mea ligg'in'  
ere aloan? T 532
- When a man hath no freedom to fight for at  
home, B 245
- When do I see thee most, beloved one?  
DGR 813
- When Earth's last picture is painted and the  
tubes are twisted and dried, Ki 975
- When first, descending from the moorlands,  
W 72
- When Helen first saw wrinkles in her face,  
L 412
- When I am dead, my dearest, CR 844
- When I have borne in memory what has  
tamed, W 41
- When I have fears that I may cease to be,  
K 360
- When I saw you last, Rose, D 950
- When Israel of the Lord beloved, Sc 133
- When I was one-and-twenty, Ho 994
- When Lazarus left his charnel-cave, T 497
- When, looking on the present face of things,  
W 48
- When on my bed the moonlight falls, T 499
- When our two souls stand up erect and  
strong, EBB 563
- When princely Hamilton's abode, Sc 125
- When the buds began to burst, L 439
- When the enemy is near thee, Cl 714
- When the Himalayan peasant meets the he-  
bear in his pride, Ki 990
- When the hounds of spring are on winter's  
traces, Sw 896
- When the lamp is shattered, Sh 346
- When vain desire at last and vain regret,  
DGR 828
- When we met first and loved, I did not build,  
EBB 565
- When we two parted, B 143
- Where are the great whom thou would'st  
wish to praise thee? Cl 714
- Where art thou, beloved To-morrow? Sh 345
- Where art thou gone, light-ankled youth?  
L 437
- Where art thou, my beloved Son, W 52
- Where Claribel low-lieth, T 445
- Where forlorn sunsets flare and fade, He 966
- Where lies the land to which the ship would  
go? Cl 721
- Where the quiet-colored end of evening smiles,  
RB 626
- Whiles in the early winter eve, M 890
- Who has seen the wind? CR 848
- Who is the happy Warrior? who is he, W 56
- "Who is your lady of love, O ye that pass, Sw  
915
- Who kill'd John Keats? B 245
- Who loves not Knowledge? Who shall rail,  
T 504
- Who prop, thou ask'st, in these hard days,  
my mind? —, Ar 727
- Who shall contend with his lords, Sw 901
- Who, who from Dian's feast would be away?  
K 367
- Who will away to Athens with me? who, L 426
- Who would be, T 447
- "Why?" Because all I haply can and do, RB  
602
- "Why did you melt your waxen man, DGR 803
- "Why from the world," Ferishtah smiled,  
"should thanks, RB 691
- Why, my heart, do we love her so? He 966
- "Why sit'st thou by that ruin'd hall, Sc 132
- "Why weep ye by the tide, ladie? Sc 132
- Why, why repine, my pensive friend, L 423
- "Why, William, on that old gray stone, W 13
- Why wilt thou cast the roses from thy hair?  
DGR 808
- Wild bird, whose warble, liquid sweet, T 502
- 'Will sprawl, now that the heat of day is  
best, RB 670
- Winter is cold-hearted, CR 847
- Wisdom and Spirit of the universe, W 16
- Wish no word unspoken, want no look away;  
RB 691

- With blackest moss the flower-pots, T 446  
 With Farmer Allan at the farm abode, T 476  
 With little here to do or see, W 43  
 With rosy hand a little girl pressed down,  
     L 424  
 With rue my heart is laden, Ho 997  
 "With sacrifice before the rising morn, W 60  
 With Shakespeare's manhood at a boy's  
     wild heart, DGR 830  
 With trembling fingers did we weave, T 496  
 Witless alike of will and way divine, RB 677  
 Woe, he went galloping into the war, RB 692  
 Worlds on worlds are rolling ever, Sh 344  
 "Would a man 'scape the rod?" RB 665  
 Would that the structure brave, the mani-  
     fold music I build, RB 666  
 Wrinkled ostler, grim and thin, T 486  
  
 Years, many parti-colored years, L 438  
 Ye Clouds! that far above me float and pause,  
     C 101  
 "Yes," I answered you last night, EBB 554  
 Yes! in the sea of life enisled, Ar 777  
 Yes, it was the mountain echo, W 57  
  
 Yes; I write verses now and then, L 424  
 Yet love, mere love, is beautiful indeed, EBB  
     561  
 Ye who have passed Death's haggard hills,  
     and ye, DGR 826  
 You ask me, why, tho' ill at ease, T 470  
 You bid me try, Blue-Eyes, to write, D 950  
 You couldn't pack a Broadwood half a mile —,  
     Ki 977  
 You know, we French stormed Ratisbon, RB  
     601  
 You'll love me yet! — and I can tarry, RB 594  
 You may talk o' gin and beer, Ki 973  
 You must wake and call me early, call me  
     early, mother dear, T 466  
 Your ghost will walk, you lover of trees, RB 634  
 Your hands lie open in the long, fresh grass —,  
     DGR 816  
 Your heart has trembled to my tongue, He 963  
 You say, but with no touch of scorn, T 502  
 You send me your love in a letter, Sw 932  
 You smiled, you spoke, and I believed, L  
     424  
 Youth! thou wear'st to manhood now, Sc 134

















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